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POLITICAL AND MILITARY CHALLENGES OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN THE CONTEXT OF SECURITY IN THE BLACK SEA BASIN

by

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December 2014

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This thesis assesses the political and military challenges facing the Republic of Moldova, as an armed neutral in the regional security architecture of the Black Sea Basin. The eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) has turned the Black Sea region into an area of overlapping partnerships, programs, and projects geared toward stabilization, development, and preparation for integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions.

Past experience shows that national security is closely connected to regional security, which requires close attention to political, economic, social, cultural, diplomatic, ethnic, and energy factors. The new geopolitical configuration in the Black Sea region presents both challenges and opportunities for Moldova to promote regional and national security through bilateral cooperation with neighboring countries and broader international engagement and relations with the European Union and NATO.

In view of this complex situation, the pursuit of a policy of armed neutrality may be the best approach for promoting the national interest and security of Moldova. Such political positioning would provide the country with opportunities for working efficiently with both neighboring nations and the West, as well as maintaining good relations with the dominant political, military, and economic force in the region—the Russian Federation.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BLACKSEAFOR	Naval Cooperation Task Force in the Black Sea
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSDP	(European Union) Common Security and Defense Policy
CTSO	Collective Treaty Security Organization
DCFTA	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EIB	European Investment Bank
ENP	European Neighborhood Policy
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union
EUFOR	European Union Force
EULEX	European Union Rule of Law Mission
EUMM	European Union Monitoring Mission
FCMA	Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GUAM	Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova (regional initiative)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISIS	International Security Information Service Europe
KFOR	Kosovo Force
NATO	Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDS	National Development Strategy
NSS	National Security Strategy
NWFZ	Nordic Nuclear Weapons Free Zone
OBSH	Black Sea Harmony
OGRF	Operational Group of Russian Forces in Transnistria, Moldova

OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace program
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SEECP	South-East Europe Cooperation Process
SELEC	Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre
SFOR	Stabilization Force
SRI	Romanian Intelligence Service
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TRASEKA	Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia
UN	United Nations
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WBSA	Wider Black Sea Area
WHO	World Health Organization

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the political and military challenges that the Republic of Moldova has, as an armed neutral, in the regional security architecture of the Black Sea Basin. The eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) has turned the Black Sea region into an area of numerous—and overlapping—partnerships, programs, and projects geared toward stabilization and development, as well as preparation for integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions. Security cooperation, as well as economic, political, and military development—have become the main concerns of the states in the Black Sea region.

The new geopolitical configuration in the Black Sea region presents both challenges and opportunities for the Republic of Moldova to promote regional and national security through bilateral cooperation with neighboring countries and broader international engagement and relations with the European Union and NATO. Since 1991, when the Soviet Union dissolved, the security concerns of the Republic of Moldova, which is a small country located between Ukraine and Romania,[1] have been generally intertwined with the interests and policies of larger regional actors, some of which seek to influence the internal situation and foreign policy of the nation. In view of this complex situation, the pursuit of a policy of armed neutrality may be the best approach for promoting the national interest and security of the Republic of Moldova. Such political positioning would provide the country with opportunities for working efficiently with both neighboring nations and the West, as well as maintaining good relations with the dominant political, military, and economic force in the region, the Russian Federation.

The purpose of this thesis is to contribute to a better understanding of the security role that the Republic of Moldova can play as an armed neutral country in the Black Sea region. Past experience shows that national security is closely connected to regional

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[1] Central Intelligence Agency, "Republic of Moldova," *World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/md html.

security, which requires close attention to political, economic, social, cultural, diplomatic, environmental, ethnical, and energy factors. Such an approach to national security considers the political-military challenges that the Republic of Moldova faces in the broader context of security in the Black Sea Basin, as well as the ramifications of this security sphere.

B.   IMPORTANCE

The collapse of communism in Southeast Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the years 1989–1991 have opened a new era in the history of the Black Sea countries. From a geopolitical perspective, this area is located at the intersection of three crucial areas: the former Soviet Union to the East, the expanded Middle East to the South, and the West, represented by NATO and the European Union; see Figure 1. Thus, the Black Sea region is seen as a "strategic bridge connecting Europe with the Caspian Sea area, Central Asia, and the Middle East."[2] The Black Sea Basin, which also links Southeast Asia and China (Silk Road),[3] is rich in natural resources and has great economic potential, although political rivalries in the region threaten stability.[4] Therefore, establishing good relations among the countries in the Black Sea Basin is of the utmost importance to guarantee the security in the area.

Amid the process of redefining Europe and transforming NATO, the Black Sea region also represents a challenge for the West. The aim is to reshape the region for the purposes of securing and anchoring democratic ideals and values, thus contributing to strengthening peace and stability in the region. Recent changes in the security environment in the Balkans, South Caucasus, and the former Soviet states exerted a direct

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[2] Central Intelligence Agency, "Republic of Moldova," *World Factbook*.

[3] Teimuraz Gorshkov and George Bagaturia, "TRACECA—Restoration of Silk Route," Central Asian Railway and Europe—Asian Land Bridge, *Japan Railway and Transport Review 28*, September 2001, http://www.jrtr.net/jrtr28/pdf/f50_gor.pdf.

[4] Central Intelligence Agency, "Republic of Moldova," *World Factbook*.

influence on the evolution of security in the Black Sea region. The wider Black Sea Basin has major strategic significance for the EU and Euro-Atlantic community as a whole.[5]

Figure 1.   Map of converging EU policies in the Black Sea region.[6]

The Republic of Moldova was one of the states that emerged after the Soviet Union collapsed. The new democratic government has established different working relationships with the actors in the Black Sea region. Still, the Republic of Moldova should be more actively involved in regional security processes. As a state with European aspirations, the country is restructuring its government systems to contribute more

[5] European Parliament, "Resolution of 20 January 2011 on an EU Strategy for the Black Sea (2010/2087(INI)," European Parliament Text Adopted, January 20, 2011 – Strasbourg, http://www.blackseanews net/en/read/48717.

[6] European Parliament, *Policy Briefing the EU's Black Sea Policy: Where Do We Stand?* Policy Department Directorate-General for External Policies, September 2013 (Belgium, EU: DG EXPO/B/PolDep/Note/2013_221, EP 491.519), 4, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/briefing_note/join/2013/491519/EXPO-AFET_SP(2013)491519_EN.pdf.

actively to regional security. Some of the reforms that the Republic of Moldova has implemented so far have included promoting democracy and regional economic integration, ensuring civilian control over armed forces, and adjusting national legislation to European standards.[7]

As strategic partner, the United States and the Republic of Moldova established multilateral relations in 1991 when Moldova became an independent country. U.S. officials have constantly supported "Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders."[8] Secretary of State John Kerry visited Moldova in 2013 to reassure the country of U.S. support in its continued pursuit of European integration. The United States and the European Union have been trying to connect Moldova's economy westwards to diminish the impact of potential Russian embargoes.[9]

Recent visits by high-ranking EU officials to the Moldovan capital Chisinau, as well as official meetings in Washington between Moldovan Prime Minister Iurie Leanca and President Obama and top U.S. leaders reiterated American support for Moldova as a Western and Europe-friendly neutral with cultural and linguistic connections to Russia.[10] In view of recent political developments in the region, particularly in Ukraine, Moldova has become increasingly important because of the buffer-zone function it could play politically and geographically in the case of future expansion of the Russian Federation. Such concerns underscore the growing importance of the Republic of Moldova in the developing security architecture of the Black Sea Basin.

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[7] European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, "Moldova Strategy," EBRD Countries, http://www.ebrd.com/pages/country/moldova/strategy.shtml.

[8] Steven Woehrel, *Moldova: Background and U.S. Policy*, (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, CRS Report No. RS21918, 2014), 8, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS21981.pdf.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., 9.

C.   PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES

Small states are generally forced to promote smart security policies. Research suggests that "neutrality is still a mainly European trend, used by the small states as a national security strategy."[11] However, the Republic of Moldova and its geographic position challenge these expectations. Moldova is facing a security problem oscillating between East and West and guaranteeing sovereignty. The existing security options that Moldova has adopted are embodied in the constitution; the "permanent neutrality" of the Republic of Moldova is proclaimed in Article 11 of the country's constitution.[12]

Risks that threaten the security of the Black Sea Basin start with the challenges arising after the reconstruction of states following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Although maintaining social harmony among various religious and ethnic groups is a serious concern, the biggest security considerations involve preserving territorial integrity, developing economic capacity, and securing energy supplies. For example, the Black Sea region is part of an important transportation corridor for delivering oil and gas from the Caspian Sea and Central Asia to Western markets. In a green paper adopted in March 2006, the European Commission recognized the strategic need for developing such transportation infrastructure in the region, particularly to provide EU countries with alternatives to Russian energy supplies.[13] Other concerns include combating human trafficking, as well as the trade in drugs and arms, controlling cross-border crime and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.[14] These problems have a direct impact on the internal security of the Republic of Moldova, as well as at the regional level, and extend even internationally.

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[11] Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States* (London; New York: Routledge, 1988), 7.

[12] Constitution of The Republic of Moldova, Article 11, Adopted on July 29, 1994, (this translation by the author). http://lex.justice.md/document_rom.php?id=44B9F30E:7AC17731.

[13] Commission of the European Communities, "Commission Staff Working Document: Summary Report on the Analysis of the Debate on the Green Paper," A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy, Brussels, December 16, 2006, SEC (2006) 1500, http://ec.europa.eu/energy/strategies/2006/doc/sec_2006_1500.pdf.

[14] Iris Kempe and Kurt Klotzle, "The Balkans and the Black Sea Region: Problems, Potentials, and Policy Options," Bertelsmann Group for Policy Research CAP Policy Analyses, No. 2 (2006): 6, http://edoc.vifapol.de/opus/volltexte/2010/2238/pdf/CAP_Policy_Analysis_2006_02.pdf.

Among the global and regional high-risk threats to the security and stability in the Black Sea area, the "frozen conflicts"[15] remain as the main danger for regional security. Numerous conflicts in the Black Sea Basin could escalate at any time, including tensions in Nagorno-Karabakh between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in Georgia between Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and in the Transnistrian[16] region in Moldova, which has been threatened by separatist movements.[17] Also, these areas of frozen conflicts are the best places for terrorist organizations, organized crime, human and arms trafficking, discouraging international investment in these countries and ruining the economy, thus creating instability in the Black Sea Basin.[18] So, identifying the solutions for these conflicts will contribute significantly to the security in the Black Sea Basin region.

One hypothesis to be explored in this thesis is that political and military dimensions play a central role in the security challenges in the Black Sea region. For the Republic of Moldova, multilateral cooperation with the European Union, neighboring countries, and the Russian Federation as well, will propagate regional stability and increase security in the Black Sea Basin. Research for this thesis will begin by considering the following essentials of the existing options on which the Republic of Moldova has based its geopolitical situation, security problems, development of the country, and energy dependency. Moldova's role in the regional security architecture of the Black Sea Basin is not enormous, but it is worth taking into consideration. Its geographical position, as well as its historical background, position Moldova to play a central role of honest broker between the European Union and East, and contribute to regional security.

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[15] Up to the present time in the literature there is still no clear definition of a frozen conflict. In general, we can say that a frozen conflict is a fluctuating, unstable security environment in areas where conflicts during their existence have not seen a legitimate mechanism of final settlement, and after persistent disagreements between the parties involved, these conflicts can be reinitiated at any time. Also, apart from the phrase "frozen conflict," in this context a similar expression can be used—latent conflicts— which are unresolved, prolonged, and stagnant.

[16] Transnistria is referred to differently in various literature; contemporary literature uses Transdnestira, Pridnestrovie, and Pridnestrovskoe Moldsvskaya Respublika (PMR). I will use Transnistria, which is used in the political system of the Republic of Moldova.

[17] Kempe and Klotzle, "The Balkans and the Black Sea Region: Problems, Potentials, and Policy Options," 8–9.

[18] Ibid., 9.

D.   LITERATURE REVIEW

The search for existing studies on the role of the Republic of Moldova as an armed neutral in the regional security architecture of the Black Sea Basin, as well as its political and military dimensions, reveals few relevant titles.[19] The small amount of specialized literature that exists is not comprehensive and addresses the situation in the Republic of Moldova only partially.

There are, admittedly, several reasons for this lack of attention. The country's small size, land-locked position, energy dependence on Russia, involvement in frozen conflicts, and other diplomatic concerns have, until recently, kept it cut off from the international spotlight. The Republic of Moldova, which as a regional actor, does not have the necessary strength to influence some security aspects in the region. Political and economic weakness, as well as Moldova's energy dependence, makes this a taboo subject, in part because Moldova depends largely on Russian gas and export. This reality necessitated a "diplomatic" approach to the topic, avoiding political, economic and ethnic problems in the country.

The country's cautious approach to security and neutrality issues is another reason that the country has kept a low profile. Most recently, because of the Transniestrian

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[19] Svante Cornell, Anna Jonsson, Niklas Nilsson, and Per Häggström, "The Wider Black Sea Region: An Emerging Hub in European Security," Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, (2006), http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/Silkroadpapers/0612Blacksea_P.pdf; Intra - Regional Perspectives on the Back Sea Affairs, Discussion Papers # 4, *The Black Sea Region: A Security Minefield or a Partnership Road* (Bucharest: Cartier, 2009), http://www.fes-moldova.org/media/publications/2009/The%20Black%20Sea%20Region%20(a%20security%20minefield%20or%20a%20partnership%20road).pdf; Ronald D. Asmus, *Next Step in Forging a Euroatlantic Strategy for the Wider Black Sea* (Washington, DC: The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2006); Iulian Chifu, Adriana Sauliuc, and Bogdan Nedea, *Energy Security Strategies in the Wider Black Sea Region* (Bucharest: Editura Curtea Veche, 2010); Mustafa Aydin, "Europe's Next Shore: The Black Sea Region after EU Enlargement," Occasional Paper, no. 53 (2004); Ariel Cohen and Irwin Conway, "U.S. Strategy in the Black Sea Region" Backgrounder, no. 1990 (2006); Kempe and Klotzle, "The Balkans and the Black Sea Region: Problems, Potentials, and Policy Options," 6; Dan Dungaciu, "Geopolitics and Security in the Black Sea - Romania and Moldova Strategic Options, Security and Stability in the Black Sea," International Scientific Session, National Defense University, Center for Defense and Strategic Studies Security, Bucharest, 2005; Oleg Serebrian, *Politics and Geopolitics* (Bucharest: Cartier, 2004); George Cristian Maior and Sergei Konoplyov, *Strategic Knowledge in the Wider Black Sea Area* (Bucharest: Biblioteca RAO, 2011); Grinevetskiy, Sergei R., Sergei S. Jhilzov and Igori S. Zonn, *The Black Sea Knot,* Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya Publishers, 2007.

conflict,[20] which has been frozen for more than 20 years, the government's approach has been to avoid an eventual armed conflict. Because of the lack of coverage in the literature,[21] particularly in view of current events in the region, this thesis is important for filling a research void and for presenting a view of the role that the Republic of Moldova can play in the Black Sea Basin.

The topic of security in the Black Sea area has been widely discussed in the specialized literature and primarily prepared by European institutions, such as the European Parliament[22] and the Commission of European Communities.[23] However, the literature has generally focused on the countries in the region that have direct access to the Black Sea. The Republic of Moldova, being a landlocked country, has been generally studied jointly with other regional states.[24]

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[20] Woehrel, *Moldova: Background and U.S. Policy*, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS21981.pdf. The Transnistria conflict is a dispute that started in March 1991, between Moldovan legal forces and the separatist region. The self-proclaimed "Dniestr Republic" was created in 1990 by ethnic Russians, and is so-called now the Moldavian Transnistrian region. The conflict active phase lasted less than a year during which hundreds of people died and homes and infrastructure were destroyed. In July 1992 there was a ceasefire and the Transnistrian conflict became a "frozen conflict," establishing a "security zone" and a peacekeeping mission on the Dniester River. The peacekeeping forces have more than 400 personnel from four sides (Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, and Transnistrian separatists). Also, a problem-solving mechanism was created for this conflict, represented by the 5+2 format. Part of the 5 +2 format includes five mediators and two observers in the negotiation process – the Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Ukraine, the OSCE, Transnistria (mediators), and the United States and European Union (observers).

[21] The last NATO Summit in Chicago in May 2012 (http://www.sferapoliticii.ro/sfera/170/art15-Lungu.php) discussed the new dynamics of military security in the Black Sea region, as well as various security work conducted by the European Union Parliament and Security Europe newsletters (http://www.seceur.info/en/security-europe-newsletter.html) that covered broader security topics in the region, avoided including the Republic of Moldova in those studies or workshops because of the limited role that Moldova can play in the Black Sea security architecture.

[22] European Parliament, "Resolution of 20 January 2011 on an EU Strategy for the Black Sea (2010/2087(INI))," European Parliament text adopted, January 20, 2011 – Strasbourg, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2011-0025+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN.

[23] Commission of the European Communities, "Commission Staff Working Document: Summary Report on the Analysis of the Debate on the Green Paper, "A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy," Brussels, November 16, 2006, http://ec.europa.eu/energy/strategies/2006/doc/sec_2006_1500.pdf.

[24] Library of Congress Country Studies Federal Research Division, "A Country Study: Moldova," http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/mdtoc.html#md0016.

Regarding regional security, Iris Kempe and Kurt Klotzle[25] provide a broad overview of the problems and the policy options available to address these challenges in the Black Sea and Balkans. Their policy analysis studies the risks and challenges inside and outside of the Euro-Atlantic area, presenting the argument that the absence of implementing effective security policies specific to this region can lead to major security problems for the European Union, Black Sea, and Balkans.[26]

From a different perspective, Fiona Houston, Duncan Wood, and Derek M. Robinson[27] focus on threats to regional security posed by the illicit trafficking of counterfeit merchandise, weapons, and drugs. Security threats arising from radioactive materials and territorial disputes also are addressed in their work. Their book titled *Black Sea Security International Cooperation and Counter-Trafficking in the Black Sea Region* is based on a NATO seminar held at Oxford University, which was attended by various officials from the Black Sea region. The work, besides addressing the security challenges to this area, looks at the potential implementation of dynamic security architecture in the Black Sea Basin, mentioning the importance of cooperation in law enforcement and counter-trafficking among Black Sea countries. Also, this book provides various solutions to the Black Sea security problems through cooperation processes, such as coordination on the national and regional level among Black Sea countries, inter-ministerial support, and creation of a forum in the Black Sea region dedicated to these security problems.[28] This book retains to some extent the ideas of previously cited literature, such as Kempe and Klotzle, yet promotes certain solutions and suggestions to the Black Sea Basin problems; therefore, it provides valuable insight into the security architecture in the region for this thesis.

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[25] Kempe and Klotzle, "The Balkans and the Black Sea Region: Problems, Potentials, and Policy Options," 6.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Fiona Houston, W. Duncan Wood, and Derek M. Robinson, *Black Sea Security International Cooperation and Counter-Trafficking in the Black Sea Region* (Washington, DC: IOS Press, 2010).

[28] Ibid.

In the same context, the Republic of Moldova National Security Strategy adopted on July 15, 2011,[29] presents the main general security strategies of Moldova. This document, based on the national Security Concept, outlines a "system of ideas that shape national security state priorities" and defines national security objectives, regulation, standards, and security strategies on both national and international levels.[30] The National Strategy is a policy act that identifies major national security threats and specifies counter-actions. Neutrality is very little discussed in this strategy; it is only mentioned in the context of Moldova-NATO cooperation, and the possible security roles that the Republic of Moldova can play in the regional architecture is discussed in general terms, lacking clear and detailed explanations of Moldova's security roles and missions.[31]

Dan Dungaciu,[32] in parallel with Oleg Serebrian[33] and Ionut Gaidau,[34] focuses on the actual security architecture in the Black Sea region. For example, Dan Dungaciu in his work *The Emerging Security Environment in the Black Sea Area: Strategic Options for Romania and Moldova* highlights the possible causes of insecurity in the Black Sea region, and potential security strategies for Moldova through neighboring countries, especially Romania.[35] The Transnistrian conflict and ethnic problems in Moldova are the main insecurity causes in the region, and the author sees NATO membership as a strategic course of the Republic of Moldova and suggests rethinking neutrality status. Also, Oleg Serebrian more broadly addresses the connected nature of security and politics in the book *Politics and Geopolitics*, promoting an idea of national security that is closely related to political will.

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[29] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova, "Decision no. 153 of the Parliament of Republic of Moldova on July 15, 2011," (this translation by the author).

[30] Republic of Moldova Parliament, "Republic of Moldova National Security Concept, May 5, 1995," http://www.mfa.gov.md/img/docs/national-security-concept-of-the-RM.doc.

[31] Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova, Moldova Government, http://www.mfa.gov.md/start-page-en/.

[32] Dungaciu, "Geopolitics and Security in the Black Sea."

[33] Serebrian, *Politics and Geopolitics.*

[34] Ionut Gaidau, "Black Sea Region–Geopolitical Space," *Cadran Politic* (*Magazine of Analysis and Political Information*), December 19, 2009, http://www.cadranpolitic ro/?p=4007.

[35] Dungaciu, "Geopolitics and Security in the Black Sea."

In the article "Black Sea Region—Geopolitical Space," Ionut Gaidau explains the geopolitical interests in the Black Sea region in terms of their importance for transporting energy, projecting power, and shielding Europe from asymmetric threats. All those factors enumerated earlier have a significant impact on the national security of the Republic of Moldova and delineates its role in regional security, as the Republic of Moldova is implicitly a part of this geopolitical space.

Collectively, the research of the authors noted previously offers a starting point from which this thesis tackles the research question. They provide an "analytical mainframe of the regional security"[36] and emphasize the security challenges in the Black Sea Basin.

Also, a few recent publications provide a broad overview of the research topic. The book *In the Wider Black Sea Area Strategic Goals and Security Policy,*[37] by George Cristian Maior and Sergei Konoplyov, address security issues in the Wider Black Sea area (WBSA). The first chapter—edited by George Cristian Maior, director of the Romanian Intelligence Service (SRI), and Mihai-Razvan Ungureanu, director of the Romanian Foreign Intelligence Service—tackles "strategic goals and security policy"[38] in the Black Sea Basin. They emphasize "confrontation between old and new rivalries"[39] and stress the need for managing uncertainty in the Black Sea area.[40] The second chapter—written by Razvan Nicolescu, head of Corporate Petrom and Vice-president of European Agency for Cooperation of Energy Regulation, Vladimir Socor, of the Jamestown Foundation, and Ana Ligia Leaua, adviser of SRI director—discusses "energy security, environment, and demography issues."[41] The third chapter—written by Bogdan Aurescu, Romanian state secretary for European affairs and Gheorghe Savu, general director of Romanian Defense Intelligence, Ministry of National Defense—addresses

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[36] Dungaciu, "Geopolitics and Security in the Black Sea," 4.

[37] Maior and Konoplyov, *Strategic Knowledge in the Wider Black Sea Area*.

[38] Ibid., 19.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., 28.

[41] Ibid., 95.

security challenges in the Wider Black Sea[42] and examines security patterns in the area.[43] The final chapter—written by Florian Coldea, first deputy director SRI, Sergiu Medar, National Security Advisor to the President of Romania, and Cristian Dincovici, deputy director Romanian Military Intelligence—emphasizes the importance of security services and their contribution to stability in the Black Sea Basin. Their work also goes on to discuss the role of the intelligence services and their contribution to regional security.

Neutrality is a notion widely used in international law. Neutral states cannot participate in war with other states or take part in different military blocs as belligerents. There are two types of neutrality: permanent and temporary, also known in some sources as wartime and peacetime neutrality. Countries like Austria, Switzerland, and Sweden enforce neutrality in different ways. For example, Austria conceives of its neutrality as a "constitutional value," rather than a formal, legal status, particularly now that Austria participates in collective security in the international environment, notably in peacekeeping missions in the Middle East and different African countries. On the other hand, Switzerland has a more serious approach to its neutrality status. Neutrality is embedded in Swiss history and security policy. Also, Swiss neutrality is directly linked with the country's national interests and represents the security and stability instrument that Switzerland uses for its security.[44]

The neutrality concept in the security context is depicted in a number of different ways. According to Lassa Oppenheim in *International Law: War and Neutrality*,[45] there are various types of neutrality. Perpetual neutrality is based on a special treaty that ensures the state's neutrality. General and partial neutrality is when an entire state territory has neutral status, but in some cases only part of state territory is neutral, for instance, by some agreement. Voluntary neutrality is when the state is adopting the neutral status voluntarily, and conventional is when there is a specific treaty that forces

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[42] Maior and Konoplyov, *Strategic Knowledge in the Wider Black Sea Area*, 168.

[43] Ibid., 175.

[44] Central Intelligence Agency, "Switzerland," *World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sz.html.

[45] Lassa Oppenheim, *International Law: War and Neutrality* (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1906), 323–327.

the state to stay neutral. Armed neutrality is when a state adopts military measures to ensure its neutrality; benevolent neutrality is described by the neutral manners of a state, and absolute vs. qualified neutrality assumes supporting one of the belligerents.[46]

The concept of the armed neutrality, which is of particular interest to this thesis, has been defined in international politics as an "attitude of a state or group of states which makes no alliance with either side in a war."[47] By comparison, Georg Schwarzenberger in *Manual of International Law* has explained neutrality in terms of military actions taken to defend a sovereign territory.[48] He gives the example of Switzerland's armed neutrality during the Franco-German War. Also, Schwarzenberger describes another form of the armed neutrality characterized by defending the status of neutrality from other belligerents.[49]

In the context of the Black Sea Basin, several authors also have generally discussed the importance of neutrality for the security of small states. Works by authors Karsh Efraim,[50] Joseph Kruzel, and Haltzel H. Michael[51] provide useful comparative study and analysis on small states and how they use neutrality for their security. Efraim, in *Neutrality and Small States,* examines the experience of small neutral states during the World War II and their implications, in general in the international arena. Additionally, Michael Haltzel, in *Between the Blocs*, studies today's European neutrals like Austria, Finland, Sweden, and Switzerland with their national security challenges and traditions. Also, Laurent F. Carrel,[52] Heinz Vetschera,[53] David S. Brackett,[54] and Philip Windsor,[55]

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[46] Oppenheim, *International Law: War and Neutrality,* 323–327.

[47] U.S. Legal, "Armed Neutrality Law & Legal Definition," Legal Definitions, http://definitions.uslegal.com/a/armed-neutrality/.

[48] Georg Schwarzenberger, *Manual of International Law* (London: Milton/Oxon, Professional Books Ltd., 1976), 177–78.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States* (London; New York: Routledge, 1988).

[51] Kruzel, Joseph and Haltzel H. Michael, *Between the Blocks: Problems and Prospects for Europe's Neutral and Nonaligned States* (Washington, DC; Cambridge England: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[52] Laurent F. Carrel, "Switzerland," in *The Missing Link: West European Neutrals and Regional Security*, edited by Richard E. Bissell and Curt Gasteyger (Durham, NC; London: Duke University Press, 1990).

describe the Austrian and Swiss models, emphasizing the small states' security options and neutrality.

E.   METHODS AND SOURCES

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the political and military challenges that the Republic of Moldova has as an armed neutral state in the regional security architecture of the Black Sea Basin, by providing an analytical study on how small and neutral states like Austria and Finland ensure their national security, and can serve as models for Moldova's case. The basic analytic approach is focused on security issues that shape the topic, focusing on different case studies and structured comparisons.

For the purpose of cross-national comparison, an analytical framework will be employed to assess the security results made by the neutral states in ensuring their own security, and their contribution to regional and global security. The intended analytical approach argues that the armed neutrality of small states may result in ensuring their domestic, regional, and global security. This framework suggests that a variety of factors influence the national security in a certain country: geopolitical situation, frozen conflicts, ethnical problems, development of the country, and energy dependence.

The study also will analyze the positive and negative consequences of the armed neutrality, concluding with an analysis of the lessons learned from other states that can benefit the Republic of Moldova. This thesis also will rely on such sources as the Congressional Research Service, Defense and Security Analysis, Strategic Studies Institute, Impact Strategic, Geostrategic Pulse, EU Security and Defense, and other occasional papers and reports that the author considers relevant to European security and to the Black Sea area. The primary sources for statistical data and government legislation

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[53] Heinz Vetschera, "Austria," in *The Missing Link: West European Neutrals and Regional Security,* edited by Richard E. Bissell and Curt Gasteyger, (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 1990).

[54] David S. Brackett, *International Relations à La Carte: A New Swiss Neutrality in Europe,* Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, WCFIA Working Paper 4 (1997), http://www.wcfia.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/.

[55] Philip Windsor, "Neutral States in Historical Perspective," in *Between the Blocs*, edited by Kruzel and Haltzel (New York: Cambridge University Press 1989).

will be the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, other international organizations, and the official websites of the Republic of Moldova.[56]

Generally the main resources for this research will be the official documents posted by the Republic of Moldova government,[57] European Union,[58] and the cases studied and analyzed (Austria and Finland). Additionally, the Republic of Moldova National Security Strategy[59] and other important national papers will provide valuable material for this study. Through analyzing and comparing models proposed, the author will arrive at the determination of Moldova's role in the security architecture of the Black Sea Basin.

Lastly, there are not many studies on this subject that would include the Republic of Moldova and its role in the Back Sea Basin. The topic was analyzed by some Romanian authors—notably from the European Institute of Romania,[60] which provides a multilateral assessment of the Black Sea Basin. Also, Russian authors Grinevetskiy, Zonn, and Jhilzov, in *The Black Sea Knot*[61] book, explain the geopolitical interest of the Black Sea countries and highlights the role that security resources play in this region.

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[56] World Bank, "Republic of Moldova," http://search.worldbank.org/all?qterm=Moldova&title=&filetype=; European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), "Republic of Moldova," http://www.ebrd.com/search/query.html?qt= moldova&submit=; International Monetary Fund (IMF), "Republic of Moldova," http://www.imf.org/external/ns/search.aspx?NewQuery=moldova&submit.x=0&submit.y=0; North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), "Republic of Moldova," http://www.nato.int/; Government of Republic of Moldova, http://www.gov.md/homepage.php?l=en; Ministry of Defense of Republic of Moldova, http://www.army md/?lng=3; International Statistical Institute (ISI), "Republic of Moldova," http://www.isi-web.org/; European Union (EU), "Republic of Moldova," http://europa.eu/geninfo/query/resultaction.jsp?ResultCount=10&ResultMaxDocs=200&DefaultLG=en&page=1&SMODE=2&Collection=EuropaFull&Collection=EuropaSL&Collection=EuropaPR&qtype=simple&ResultTemplate=%2Fresult_en.jsp&QueryText=moldova&y=0&x=0; World Health Organization Europe (WHO), http://www.euro.who.int/en/publications/search/a-z-list-of-all-publications.

[57] Republic of Moldova Government, Moldova Governement, http://www.gov md/.

[58] European Union, "European Law and Treaties," Europe, http://europa.eu/abc/treaties/index_en.htm.

[59] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova, "Decision no. 153 of the Parliament of Republic of Moldova on July 15, 2011," Moldova Parlament. (this translation by the author).

[60] Adrian Pop, and Dan Manoleli, *Towards a European Strategy in the Black Sea Basin, Territorial Cooperation, European Institute of Romania* (Bucharest: European Institute of Romania, December 2007).

[61] Grinevetskiy, Sergei R., Sergei S. Jhilzov and Igori S. Zonn, *The Black Sea Knot* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya Publishers, 2007).

F.   THESIS OVERVIEW

The thesis identifies the political and military challenges of the Republic of Moldova as an armed neutral in the regional security architecture of the Black Sea Basin. The thesis consists of four major chapters. Following this introductory chapter, which contains the research question, importance, and literature review, Chapter II provides an overview of political and military situation in the Black Sea Basin. Chapter III explains the Republic of Moldova National Security Strategy, resulting from its geopolitical positioning and existing frozen conflicts. Chapter IV promotes the armed neutrality concept for Moldova, adopted by European states. The chapter also includes some conceptual clarifications and a framework for analysis and comparative analysis of Austria and Finland, paying attention to the government policies that have implemented the neutrality and the underlying motivations of those policies.

Although a preliminary look at the data shows that the neutral countries in Europe have followed different paths to ensure their security, an attempt will be made to identify commonalities for the benefit of providing a deeper understanding of the situation in Moldova.

II. POLITICAL-MILITARY SITUATION IN THE BLACK SEA BASIN

The new security configuration in the Black Sea Basin, which emerged after the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, highlights the increasing economic, political, and military importance of this strategic transportation corridor that links the energy resources of Eurasia with Europe. "An area of competition between Turkey and Russia and the source of bloody wars for hundreds of years,"[62] as well as part of the Soviet sphere of influence during the Cold War, the Black Sea region is vital to a vast array of regional and international actors, including NATO, the European Union, and the United States.[63] The Black Sea region obliges the regional and international actors to cooperate and pay a closer attention in securing the energy pipeline routes and asymmetrical threats, thus contributing to the regional and international security.[64]

This chapter analyzes the political-military situation in the Black Sea Basin and the strategic significance of this area for the regional and international actors. The states with direct access to the Black Sea, as Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, and Georgia directly influence the economic, politic and security processes in the area. The riparian countries—Republic of Moldova, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Greece—shape the Wider Black Sea region and have their specific role in the region.

On the one hand, the region seems rife with contrasts and conflict. Overall, the changes in the international system since the collapse of Soviet Union have placed the Black Sea states in continuous political, economic, and security struggles. The region's ethnic, social, and religious diversity (Orthodoxy and Islam predominate), sometimes freely and sometimes more tensely, contributes in this regard. Also, the Black Sea Basin is the home to NATO states, neutral states, and Russian satellites, all strung like pearls

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[62] Fatih Ozbay, "Discussions about Violations of the Montreux Convention and the Future of Turkish-Russia Relations," Hazar Strateji Instityso blog, http://www.hazar.org/blogdetail/blogs /discussions_about_violation_of_the_montreux_convention_and_the_future_of_turkish_russian_relations_ 793.aspx.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Romanian's Permanent Delegation to NATO, "Black Sea," Romania in NATO, http://nato.mae.ro/node/178.

along the region's vital pipelines and trade routes. There are tensions amid these differences, some of which could easily spill out beyond the region; nonetheless, on the other hand, the points of contact and connection among the various players make the Black Sea region more than just an expedient label.

A. BLACK SEA REGION AND REGIONAL SECURITY

Amid the process of redefining Europe and transforming NATO, the Black Sea region also represents a challenge for the West. The aim is to reshape the region for the purposes of securing and anchoring democratic ideals and values, thus strengthening peace and stability in the region. Recent changes in the security environment in the Balkans, South Caucasus, and the former Soviet states also affect the evolution of security in the Black Sea region. The Wider Black Sea Basin has major strategic significance for the European Union and Euro-Atlantic community as a whole. The European Parliament, in its strategy resolution for the Black Sea area, "recalls that the Black Sea region is of geo-strategic importance for the energy security of the EU."[65] Also, the strategic vector of the Black Sea with the Caspian Sea raises an increased interest of the main players in the region. In contrast to these concerns, the Russian Federation is trying to use this region to restore its former politico-military and economic bloc and to regain its position as hegemon.[66]

1. Geography and Political Boundaries

The Black Sea is part of the so-called Pontic Basin, located between Europe and Asia, connecting to the Azov Sea by the Cherci Strait; to the Marmara Sea through the Bosporus; and to the Aegean and Mediterranean Sea through the Dardanelles Strait.[67] Within the Wider Black Sea Basin, the Republic of Moldova, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Greece are the riparian states, which shape the wider Black Sea region. However, the

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[65] European Parliament, "Resolution of January 20, 2011 on an EU Strategy for the Black Sea (2010/2087(INI)," European Parliament Text Adopted, January 20, 2011 – Strasbourg, *Black Sea News*, http://www.blackseanews net/en/read/48717.

[66] Marek Menkiszak, "The Putin Doctrine: The Formation of a Conceptual Framework for Russian Dominance in the Post-Soviet Area," *OSW Commentary*, http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2014-03-27/putin-doctrine-formation-a-conceptual-framework-russian.

[67] Pontica, "Black Sea," Black Sea Basin Map, http://ecomareaneagra.wordpress.com/marea-neagra/.

term "Wider Black Sea Region" refers more to a political and economic region than a geographical one.

Considered a gateway of oil and gas transit from Central Asia and the Caucasus to Europe, the Black Sea became a direct neighbor of the European Union once Romania and Bulgaria became members in 2007.[68] Viewed as a "strategic bridge connecting Europe with the Caspian Sea, Central Asia, and the Middle East,"[69] the Black Sea Basin, which also links Southeast Asia and China (Silk Road),[70] is abundant in natural resources and has great economic potential, although political rivalries in the region threaten regional stability.[71] The main actors in the Black Sea Basin, which encompasses some 834,719 square kilometers and a population of 74.2 million, are Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Romania, Greece, Bulgaria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, and Georgia. Four of these countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Moldova, and Georgia) are territorially situated entirely in the Black Sea Basin, while only sections of Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece intersect with the Black Sea region. Furthermore, of all the Black Sea countries, six have direct access to the Black Sea—Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, and Georgia. Moldova, Armenia, and Azerbaijan are landlocked states that maintain close economic, social, and historical ties with the Black Sea Basin.[72] The map in Figure 2 shows the broader Black Sea region, including states with trade or security connections to the region.

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[68] Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The Black Sea Region," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, http://www.mae ro/node/1431.

[69] Central Intelligence Agency, "Republic of Moldova," *The World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/md html.

[70] Teimuraz Gorshkov and George Bagaturia, "TRACECA—Restoration of Silk Route," Central Asian Railway and Europe—Asian Land Bridge, *Japan Railway and Transportation Review 28*, September 2001, http://www.jrtr.net/jrtr28/pdf/f50_gor.pdf.

[71] Central Intelligence Agency, "Republic of Moldova," *World Factbook.*

[72] European Moldova, "Joint Operational Cooperation Program in the Black Sea Basin 2007–2013," European Union in Moldova, http://infoeuropa.md/programul-operational-comun-de-cooperare-in-bazinului-marii-negre-2007-2013/.

Figure 2.   Black Sea Basin.[73]

Inside of all these states (except Greece), the new geopolitical settlement created diverse armed conflicts with territorial disputes—in the Republic of Moldova (Transnistria), between Armenia and Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh), and in Georgia between (Abkhazia and South Ossetia). There remain internal political and ethnic friction in Turkey and the difficult process of democratization in Romania and Bulgaria.[74] The interstate rivalries are also an area issue, in which the irredentism and revanchist phenomenon, between the aforementioned countries, impacts the coherence of the political and economic unity of the region, shaping the Black Sea security architecture.[75]

> The region is politically, historically, and geographically divided. Today, three principal actors influence security policy options. Russia fears encirclement by the West, and thus works to counteract EU and U.S.

[73] Pontica, "Black Sea," Black Sea Basin Map, http://ecomareaneagra.wordpress.com/marea-neagra/.

[74] Ionut Gaidau, "Black Sea Region - Geopolitical Space," *Cadran Politic*, no.69 (December 2009).

[75] Mitat Çelikpala, "Security in the Black Sea Region Policy Report II," Commission on the Black Sea, A project of the German Marshall Fund Bertelsmann Stiftung, http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/bst/en/media/xcms_bst_dms_30921_30922_2.pdf.

influence in the region. It seeks to maintain its own role as the key regional actor, and to block externally driven energy projects or military alliances. It wants to prevent NATO enlargement, as well as to suppress fundamentalist movements.[76]

2.   Treaties, Agreements, and Alliances

The current situation in Ukraine reveals the volatility of NATO/EU expansion into the region.[77] As part of its expansion eastward, NATO and the European Union have promoted cooperation in the Black Sea Basin that has led to short-term gains in regional stability. Romania and Bulgaria joined NATO in 2004. Although Turkey has been a leading member of NATO since 1952, it is still in the process of accession to the European Union. Whereas the question of joining NATO and the European Union has been politically divisive in Ukraine, citizens of Georgia have been more unified in their nation's efforts to integrate into Western Europe and NATO.[78] Azerbaijan and Armenia, driven by economic considerations, also are interested in deepening relations with the European Union.[79] Likewise, with strong political will to align with Western powers, Moldova signed an association agreement with the European Union in June 2014; however, the Republic of Moldova is also concerned with maintaining its posture as a neutral in the Black Sea Basin.[80]

However, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), which includes 16 ENP countries, also has an action plan, alternately called the *Association Agendas for Eastern partner countries.* It is a platform for the European Union to engage "with its southern and eastern neighbors to achieve the closest possible political association and the greatest possible degree of economic integration. This goal builds on common interests and on

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[76] Çelikpala, "Security in the Black Sea Region Policy Report II," 5.

[77] Clifford G. Gaddy and Barry W. Ickes, "Ukraine, NATO Enlargement, and the Geithner Doctrine," *Brookings*, June 10, 2014, http://www.brookings.edu/research/articles/2014/06/10-ukraine-nato-geithner-doctrine-gaddy-ickes.

[78] Government of Georgia, "Prime Minister Met NATO Secretary General," Prime Minister's Press Service, http://government.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=387&info_id=40531.

[79] Fariz Ismailzade, "Azerbaijan and Europe: Toward Closer Integration?," Diplomatic Traffic Debate Archives, http://www.diplomatictraffic.com/debate_archives.asp?ID=601.

[80] Council of the European Union, "EU - Republic of Moldova Cooperation Council Sixteenth Meeting - Brussels, June 26, 2014, Council of Europe, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/er/143407.pdf.

values—democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and social cohesion."[81] Also, another EU project, launched in 2008 in Kiev, is designed to increase regional progress of South-East Europe and the Black Sea Synergy. This program allows the European Union to create new regional agenda for neighboring countries in the Black Sea spot, and provide civil assistance in the region referring to environment issues, energy, and transportation.[82]

The 2014 Wales NATO summit recognized the importance of the Black Sea region, specifying its vital role in Euro-Atlantic security. Also, NATO came with a security initiative to support regional projects, increasing security in the area, and promoting cooperation between Black Sea Basin states.[83]

For NATO, the Black Sea region has become the new front line in the fight against trafficking in arms, drugs, humans, and terrorism.[84] In this context, various regional cooperation organizations and structures took shape that aim to monitor risks and threats. The main three are the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC),[85] Naval Cooperation Task Force in the Black Sea (BLACKSEAFOR),[86] and the Black Sea

[81] European Union External Actions, "European Neighborhood Policy (ENP)," European Union, http://eeas.europa.eu/blacksea/index_en.htm.

[82] European Union External Actions, "Black Sea Synergy," European Union, http://eeas.europa.eu/blacksea/index_en.htm.

[83] NATO, "Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales Article 18," Press Release (2014) 120, September 5, 2014, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm?selectedLocale=en.

[84] Çelikpala, "Security in the Black Sea Region Policy Report II," 5.

[85] Black Sea Economic Cooperation is multilateral economic and political cooperation, signed in 1992 between eleven states from the Wider Black Sea Region, with the tasks of insuring stability and security in the Black Sea Region. The states are Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine.

[86] The Naval Cooperation Task Force in the Black Sea - BLACKSEAFOR is a regional project, launched by Turkey, between Black Sea neighbor countries (Turkey, Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, and Georgia). The organization mission is to increase cooperation and interoperability between their naval forces, based on friendship and mutual understanding. In 2001, in Istanbul = BLACKSEAFOR was signed by officials of all six member countries, with Turkey being the depository of this agreement. The agreement stipulates that BLACKSEAFOR tasks will have only a non-military character.

Harmony (OBSH).[87] However, in addition to all these Black Sea Forum initiatives, there are also the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), European Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), and European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), which through political, economic, and military cooperation and joint effort contribute to maintain security in the Black Sea region.[88]

3. Security Threats

Although maintaining social harmony among various religious and ethnic groups remains a serious concern, the biggest security considerations involve preserving territorial integrity, developing economic capacity, and securing energy supplies. Other issues include human trafficking, as well as the trade in drugs and arms, cross-border crime, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.[89] These factors discourage international investment in these countries and imperil the economy, thus creating instability in the Black Sea Basin.[90]

The region's "frozen conflicts," notably in Moldova, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, remain the main danger for Black Sea security. These conflicts in the Black Sea Basin could escalate at any time. They have their origins in the Soviet period. Stalin resettled ethnic groups and redefined borders as a way of controlling minority populations within the Soviet Union, and underlying and unsettled conflicts among the various ethnic or ideological groups have re-emerged in the region. These conflicts differ in scale, form, and duration, but in general they share identical aims. Figure 3 highlights these regions that have conflicts in their territory.

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[87] The Black Sea Harmony operation is a national Turkish project; its main tasks are the fight against terrorism and organized crime in the Black Sea. In the beginning the Turkish Navy conducted various operations to achieve its security objectives in the Black Sea; joining this initiative later were other countries from the region, giving this operation a multinational character of maintaining security in the Black Sea.

[88] Alexandros Petersen, "Black Sea Security: The NATO Imperative," Global Europe Program, Wilson Center, http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/black-sea-security-the-nato-imperative.

[89] Kempe and Klotzle, "The Balkans and the Black Sea Region: Problems, Potentials, and Policy Options," 6.

[90] Ibid., 9.

Figure 3.　Conflicts in the Black Sea Region.[91]

For example, relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan remain affected by the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which is still an unsettled ethnic dispute. Since 2008, Georgia has lost control of approximately 18 percent of its national territory, and today continues an active confrontation with the secessionist actions in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The Russian Federation remains engaged in the Chechnya conflict, and the North Caucasus is still a hotbed for separatist movements. Moldova's territorial integrity problems are exacerbated by separatists in Tiraspol,[92] Transnistria, who control a small territory that they use, however, as an extremely significant corridor of organized crime, human trafficking, drugs and arms trafficking, cross-border crime, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.[93]

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[91] Çelikpala, "Security in the Black Sea Region Policy Report II," Figure 1.

[92] Tiraspol is the second largest city by size in the Republic of Moldova. Currently, it is the capital of the separatist region of Moldova, unrecognized Transnistria.

[93] Lina Vdovîi, Mircea Opriş, and Adrian Mogoş, "Transnistria - Europe's Hub of Smuggling and Trafficking," *Journalistic Investigation Center* (Romanian Version), http://www.investigatii.md/eng/index.php?art=221.

Such separatist forces have become increasingly active amid these unsettled "frozen conflicts." The informal meetings that bring together the unrecognized republics of Transnistria, Abkhazia, Karabakh and South Ossetia serve as a real threat and destabilization factor in the region. The leaders of these "quasi-state" entities have regular "official mutual visits," where they promise each other political and military support, sign economic agreements, and manufacture and smuggle weapons in the conflict areas.[94] The recent Russian-Ukrainian conflict amply demonstrates the transnational threats in the Black Sea Basin.[95]

4.   Economic and Energy Interests

The discovery of oil in the Caucasus and Central Asia has turned the Black Sea Basin into a strategic transportation corridor connecting Europe, Central Asia, the southeastern Mediterranean, and the Middle East. The important geographic zone also is especially relevant to the riparian countries and other powers, such as the United States, Russia, and the European Union.[96] With various security threats in the Middle East, and increased demand for energy from India and China, as well as the Russian energy dependence of Europe, the Euro-Atlantic community is essentially concerned about diversifying its energy supply. In this framework, the Black Sea Basin is projected to represent a pivotal transportation energy path[97] from the Caspian Sea and Central Asia to Western markets; see Figure 4.[98]

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[94] Miles Atkinson and Fleur De Weerd, "Transnistria: A Country That Doesn't Exist, But Has the Guns to Make You Think Otherwise," *The Huffington Post*, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/miles-atkinson-fleur-de-weerd/transnistria-a-country-that-doesnt-exist_b_2421694 html.

[95] Mykola Kapitonenko, "Resolving Post-Soviet 'Frozen Conflicts': Is Regional Integration Helpful?" *Caucasian Review of International Affairs*, http://www.cria-online.org/6_4.html.

[96] Stamate Marius Gerald, "Geopolitical, Geoeconomical and Geostrategical Tendencies in the Black Sea-Caucasus Area," *Romania Relations with South Caucasus. 1991–2001*, http://www.academia.edu/724470/TENDINTELE_GEOPOLITICE_GEOECONOMICE_SI_GEOSTRAT EGICE_REGIONALE_IN_ZONA_MARII_NEGRE_-_CAUCAZ._GEOPOLITICAL_GEOECONOMICAL_AND_GEOSTRATEGICAL_TENDENCIES_IN_T HE_BLACK_SEA-CAUCASUS_AREA.

[97] Roddy Thomson, "European Leaders Launched a Trillion-Euro Bid to Slash Dependency on Middle East Oil and Russian Gas, Clearing the Way to Place Nuclear Power at the Center of 21st Century Needs," *PHYS.ORG*, February 4, 2011**,** http://phys.org/news/2011-02-europe-trillion-euro-energy-revamp html#jCp.

[98] Ibid.

Figure 4.   Principal European gas pipelines.[99]

The economic and energy dimension in the Black Sea Basin also is a source of economic competition between different states in the region, at times escalating into diplomatic and armed crises.[100] These energy crises have involved Russia-Belarus in 2004, Russia-Ukraine in 2006, Russia-Moldova in 2006, Russia-Belarus in 2007, Russia-Ukraine in 2009, and Russia-Belarus in 2010, highlighting the importance of energy for the security in this area. Particularly, the 2009 Russian-Ukrainian gas crisis illustrated the importance of the Russian gas route, which transits the Confederation of Independent States (Western CIS) and reveals the EU energy dependence on the Russian Federation.[101]

The transit routes (to a large extent crossing through the Black Sea countries) play a significant role in the security architecture of this region and the European continent as a whole. Also, natural gas is the main source of energy for the European countries.[102]

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99 *Economist*, "America and Russia: Pipedreams," *The Economist*, http://www.economist.com/node/10566657.

100 Gaidau, "Black Sea Region - Geopolitical Space."

101 Katja Yafimava, *The Transit Dimension of EU Energy Security: Russian Gas Transit Across Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 2.

102 Ibid., 3.

The new energy strategy of the European Union is based on reducing pollution, protecting the environment, and stabilizing the cost of energy for the future.

> Europe is becoming increasingly dependent on imported hydrocarbons. With "business as usual" the EU's energy import dependence will jump from 50 percent of total EU energy consumption today to 65 percent in 2030. Reliance on imports of gas is expected to increase from 57 percent to 84 percent by 2030, of oil from 82 percent to 93 percent.[103]

The EU energy security objectives for the future are "promoting nonproliferation, as well as nuclear safety and security, in particular through a reinforced cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency and through the new Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation."[104] To achieve these objectives, the European Union has been promoting increased collaboration and communication with the European Investment Bank (EIB) and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), using investment programs to finance energy projects such as the "Trans-Caspian energy corridor or the Sub Saharan–Maghreb–EU."[105] The two projects currently in development are competing to supply Europe's energy needs. The EU's priority is the Nabucco gas pipeline, which connects the Caspian Basin to Austria and Hungary. Secondarily, the Russian-supported South Stream pipeline is planned to transport energy to Europe from Central Asia and North Africa.[106]

The Russian Federation, which is the main producer of oil and gas in the area (and in the world)[107] as well as the major gas provider to Europe,[108] has particular interest in the energy game in the Black Sea. Approximately 25 percent of EU gas is provided by

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[103] EUR-Lex, *An Energy Policy for Europe,* Access to European Union Law, Communication from the Commission to the European Council and the European Parliament - {SEC(2007) 12} /* COM/2007/0001 Final**,** Brussels, January 10, 2007, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52007DC0001.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Christopher Helman, "The World's Biggest Oil Companies," *Forbes*, http://www.forbes.com/sites/christopherhelman/2012/07/16/the-worlds-25-biggest-oil-companies/.

[108] Günther H. Oettinger, European Energy Security Strategy: Key Priorities and Actions, *European Commission - SPEECH/14/505 - 25/06/2014*, College of Europe and European Commission: First Joint High-Level Roundtable on EU Energy Policy, Brussels, June 25, 2014, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-505_en.htm.

Russia (Figure 5). For Moscow, the "Gazprom[109] weapon" is a political and economic tool used to keep pressure on the European Union and other riparian countries (e.g., Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Belarus, and Ukraine). To ensure energy security, EU countries have been developing multiple import options. However, the older members of the European community are more developed and diverse in energy supply options, while the newest members, lacking infrastructure and energy options, are more dependent on Russian gas.[110]

Figure 5.   European gas supplied by Russian Federation.[111]

All of Europe is not equally reliant on Russian gas. Austria, Turkey, Greece, Poland, and Hungary import more than 50 percent of their gas from Russia, while Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia are entirely dependent on Russian gas. Notably, Croatia, Spain, and Sweden are among the countries that do not depend on Russian

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[109] Gazprom, a Russian energy company founded in 1989, is the largest natural gas producer in the world. The Russian government controls Gazprom entirely. Gazprom is headquartered in Moscow, Russia, and Alexei Miller is the director executive of the company.

[110] Yafimava, *The Transit Dimension of EU Energy Security: Russian Gas Transit Across Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova*, 73–74.

[111] *Economist*, "Reducing Europe's Dependence on Russian Gas is Possible—But it will Take Time, Money and Sustained Political Will," *The Economist*, April 5, 2014, http://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21600111-reducing-europes-dependence-russian-gas-possiblebut-it-will-take-time-money-and-sustained.

gas.[112] Therefore, concomitant with increasing energy demand and dependence on Russian resources, the importance of transit routes has risen significantly. Until reaching the final consumer in Europe, the energy resources cross several non-EU states (Figure 6). However, there is no watchdog authority to regulate arising conflicts in these transit countries, which is a major source of regional instability.[113]

Figure 6.   Western Russian pipelines transporting gas to Europe through CIS.[114]

The security environment in the Black Sea Basin, as well as for the European Union, depends significantly on future energy security alternatives, diversifying the energy market, and reducing the Russian gas dependence. The United States supports the

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[112] Yafimava, *The Transit Dimension of EU Energy Security: Russian Gas Transit Across Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova*, 73–76.

[113] Ibid., 79–80.

[114] Yafimava, *The Transit Dimension of EU Energy Security: Russian Gas Transit Across Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova*, Map 4.1: Transit Pipelines Bringing Russian Gas to Europe across the Western CIS, 77, (original source: A. Honore, *European Natural Gas Demand, Supply, and Pricing,* OIES/OUP, 2010, 139. (amended)).

EU's Nabucco-West pipeline project (Figure 7) through Baku (Azerbaijan) as an alternative to Russian gas dependence.[115]

Figure 7.   Proposed Nabucco gas pipeline.[116]

Similarly, the Russian Federation is promoting the South Stream pipeline (Figure 8),[117] which Russia anticipates will carry more resources to Europe using the Caucasus and Russian sources, and passing the offshore Black Sea portions, avoiding different states' territorial waters.[118]

[115] Vladimir Socor, "Nabucco-West Project, European Commission Face Same Moment of Truth in Baku," The Jamestown Foundation, *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 10, no. 102 (May 30, 2013), http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=40957&no_cache=1#.U8qpM_mSzCI.

[116] European Dialogue, "Europe's Southern Gas Corridor: The Great Pipeline Race," European Energy Security and Related Issues, http://eurodialogue.org/Nabucco-Map.

[117] South Stream, "About South Stream," http://www.south-stream.info/en/pipeline/significance/; The South Stream Pipeline is a Russian Federation initiative in EU energy security, which consists of building gas supplies and avoiding the transit risks. The aim of the South Stream project is providing the EU with additional natural gas, which is considered secure and better for the environment than fossil fuel. Also, the South Stream project is the main plan for gas supply routes to the EU.

[118] European Dialogue, "Europe's Southern Gas Corridor: The Great Pipeline Race."
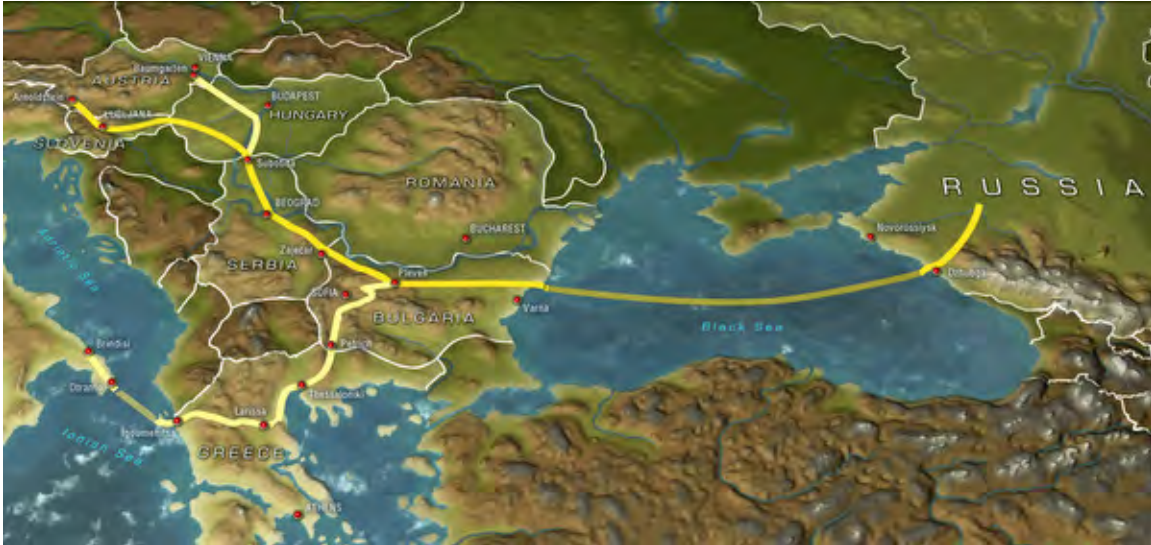
Figure 8.   Proposed South Stream pipeline on the map of Europe.[119]

Regardless of any political and economic interests, regional security depends on the ability of all Black Sea states and willingness of energy transit countries to cooperate.

B.   THE ROLE OF NATIONAL ACTORS IN POLITICS, ECONOMICS, AND SECURITY

Before the Soviet Union collapsed, NATO and the Warsaw Pact[120] were the two main powers in the Black Sea region. However, since the end of the Cold War, numerous regional actors have emerged in the area. Today, all of the countries in the Black Sea Basin are struggling to solve political, economic, and security problems. To better understand the security architecture in the Black Sea Basin and its regional problems, a multilateral analysis of the regional and international players is necessary.

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[119] European Dialogue, "Europe's Southern Gas Corridor: The Great Pipeline Race," European Energy Security and Related Issues: South Stream on the Map of Europe, http://eurodialogue.org/South-Stream-on-the-map-of-Europe.

[120] The Warsaw Pact was initiated by Nikita Khrushchev in 1955 and was signed in Warsaw on May 14, 1955. This pact was a military alliance of countries in Eastern Europe and the Eastern Bloc, who wanted to defend against the NATO alliance. The Warsaw Pact stopped operating on March 3, 1991, and was officially dissolved at a meeting in Prague on July 1, 1991.

1.   **Russian Federation**

Facing a deep crisis in the last decade as a result of losing super-power status, today Russia is strengthening its political, economic, and military efforts to consolidate the Russian state, strengthen CIS, and re-establish control over the former Soviet republics (seen as a resuscitation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, USSR).[121] Recent events in Ukraine, as well as the union of Crimea with the Russian Federation, have reshaped the geographical borders of Russia and significantly increased its influence and military presence in the Black Sea Basin. Accordingly, the Russian Federation now officially controls a larger segment of the Black Sea, which consists of the full littoral of the Crimean peninsula and the Kerch Straits, near main oil and gas routes linking the Black and Caspian seas.[122] As a result of the March 2014 treaty between Russia and Crimea, the Russian Federation extended its jurisdiction over the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov (Donetsk region); the agreement also gave autonomous status to Russia's naval fleet in Sevastopol, which until then was part of the group of forces in the Black Sea.[123] Thus, Russia has extended its influence over the Black Sea Basin and other important water routes (Black Sea-Sea of Azov-Don-Volga Don Canal-Volga-Caspian Sea).[124]

With NATO's eastward expansion and the accession of Balkan countries to Euro-Atlantic structures, Russia began to worry about the proximity of North Atlantic organizations to its border. Of particular concern has been NATO's newly acquired direct access to the Black Sea via Romania and Bulgaria.[125] Thus, to preserve its influence over

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[121] Arseni Iațeniuk, "Arseniy Iateniuk 'Resuscitation of USSR' Could Be the Biggest Disaster of this Century," *Radio Free Europe*, April 4, 2014, http://www.europalibera.org/archive/news/20140404/445/445 html?id=25321231.

[122] Michel Chossudovsky, "Crisis in Ukraine: Russia Extends its Control over the Black Sea and Strategic Waterways," *Global Research,* March 18, 2014, http://www.globalresearch.ca/russia-extends-its-control-over-the-black-sea-and-strategic-waterways/5374021.

[123] President of Russia, "Agreement on the Accession of the Republic of Crimea to the Russian Federation Signed," Kremlin ru, http://eng kremlin ru/news/6890.

[124] Chossudovsky, "Crisis in Ukraine: Russia Extends its Control over the Black Sea and Strategic Waterways."

[125] *Ziare Magazine*, "Lavrov: NATO's Eastward Expansion is Counterproductive," *Ziare.com*, http://www.ziare.com/international/rusia/lavrov-extinderea-nato-catre-est-este-contraproductiva-1303538.

the former Soviet area, the Russian Federation has turned to using its economic leverage and sometimes even military force.[126]

Despite extensive efforts made by the Russian Federation to improve its multilateral relations with the European Union[127] and NATO,[128] the current crises in Ukraine (including the recent shooting down of a commercial jetliner in the Donetsk region and the disputes over Crimea) significantly jeopardize their relations. Nevertheless, to strengthen its position as a core actor in the Black Sea Basin and throughout Europe, and to regain world super-power status, the Russian Federation continues to use the energy dependence in relations with the European Union, and frozen conflicts, and the motive of protecting the Russian-speaking population all over the former Soviet sphere.[129]

2.   Turkey

Linking Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Middle East, Turkey is strategically located and plays a significant military and economic role in the Black Sea region.[130] Before its defeat in World War I, the Ottoman Empire, from which the modern Republic of Turkey emerged, conducted commerce and maintained relations throughout the region.[131] During the Cold War, Turkey played a buffering role between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Later, after the Soviet Union broke apart, Turkey began to consolidate

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[126] Fiona Hill and Pamela Jewett, "Back in the USSR: Russia's Intervention in the Internal Affairs of the Former Soviet Republics and the Implications for United States Policy Towards Russia," Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2014/03/back-in-the-ussr-1994-hill-jewett.

[127] European Union External Actions, "EU relations with Russia," EU Around the Globe, http://eeas.europa.eu/russia/.

[128] NATO, "NATO's Relations with Russia," NATO International, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50090.htm?.

[129] TSG Intel Brief, "The Gas Bloc: Russia's Sphere of Energy Influence," TSG The Soufan Group, http://soufangroup.com/tsg-intelbrief-the-gas-bloc-russias-sphere-of-energy-influence/.

[130] Central Intelligence Agency, "Turkey," *World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tu html.

[131] NZ History, "The Ottoman Empire Page 10 – Birth of the Turkish Republic," NZhistory, http://www.nzhistory.net nz/war/ottoman-empire/birth-of-turkey.

its position as a major player in the Black Sea Basin and strengthened its relationship with NATO.[132]

Realizing its strategic importance and military power, Turkey started using the Black Sea Basin to achieve its economic goals through regional trade. It also sought to fortify its security with NATO. Toward these objectives, Turkey has contributed in the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), which was started in 1999. However, because of various internal issues and the 2008 Georgia-Russian war, the project has been somewhat threatened by uncertainty and insecurity.[133]

The Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia (TRASEKA), with the purpose of linking Central Asia to Europe via the South Caucasus, is another Black Sea project that has significantly affected the Turkish economy, as well as European energy security.[134] Turkey's central objective in the region remains to become the main access point connecting Central Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. This is one reason why Turkey voted for re-establishment of the Silk Road, which historically was very profitable.[135]

However, since 1999, Turkey has been an EU candidate country and increasingly dependent on its partnerships with the European Union and the United States for regional security. Solidarity with the United States in the fight against international terrorism since 2001 particularly has contributed to a favorable security environment in the region.[136] However, Turkey's prodigious border with Syria is riddled with strife, which faces

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[132] Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Turkey's Relations with NATO," *Turkey Foreign Policy*, http://www mfa.gov.tr/nato.en mfa.

[133] Alexander Vasiliev, "The Black Sea Region in Turkish Foreign Policy Strategy: Russia & Turkey on the Black Sea," Carnegie Moscow Center Report No. 2010/2: 2, Black Sea Peacebuilding Network Russian Expert Group, http://carnegieendowment.org/files/Turkey_black_sea_report_eng.pdf.

[134] Giray Saynur Bozkurt, "Security Policy of Turkey and Russia in the Black sea Basin," Karam.org, http://www.karam.org.tr/Makaleler/631151712_Giray%20Saynur%20Bozkurt.pdf.

[135] Ertugrul APAKAN, "Turkey's Approach to the Black Sea Region and to the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)," *Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-approach-to-the-black-sea-region-and-to-the-organization-of-the-black-sea-economic-cooperation-_bsec_-.tr mfa.

[136] United States Department of States, "U.S. Relations with Turkey," Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, April 3, 2014 Fact Sheet, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3432 htm.

"regional violence and a growing influx of Syrian refugees."[137] Until now, Turkey also has maintained close economic relations with the Russian Federation, through their historic path and large marketplace in the region. Furthermore, the security of Turkey, as well as political-economic relations with its Black Sea partners, which is related to its domestic policy, must be analyzed in terms of the Islamic factor, which has a significant importance.[138]

3.   Ukraine

Ukraine is one of the largest countries in continental Europe and plays a significant part in the security of the Black Sea Basin. With a strategic geographical position, connecting Europe with Asia, and a large Black Sea coastline, Ukraine's role in regional security is central.[139] Externally, Ukraine has good and constructive relations with the European Union, endeavoring to achieve economic integration and political association. The country's relationship with NATO has been amplified because of the recent conflict with Russia. Moreover, Ukraine has been an Organization for Democracy and Economic Development (regional initiative between Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova, GUAM) member from the beginning of this project in 2001. Also, since 1998, Ukraine has been a major associate in the Eastern Partnership, which is an ENP component. In March 2014, Ukraine signed a free trade agreement with the European Union.[140]

Internally, Ukraine faces many ethnic, religious, political, economic, sovereignty, and territorial-integrity problems. With the outbreak of the Ukrainian-Russian conflict in the beginning of 2014, the security architecture in the Black Sea Basin has deteriorated considerably. The Russian Federation is using its political and economic leverage to keep

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[137] James A. Baker III, "Trouble at the Border: Turkey's Syria Policy is Under Fire," Baker Institute Blog, http://blog.chron.com/bakerblog/2014/07/trouble-at-the-border-turkeys-syria-policy-is-under-fire/.

[138] Vasiliev, "The Black Sea Region in Turkish Foreign Policy Strategy: Russia & Turkey on the Black Sea," 4–5.

[139] Central Intelligence Agency, "Ukraine," *World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/up.html.

[140] European Union External Actions, "The EU's Relations with Ukraine," EU Around the Globe, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ukraine/.

Ukraine under its influence. In the context of losing the Crimean region, Ukraine also lost an important part of the Black Sea littoral, and diminished Ukraine's access to the Black Sea while it provided a warm-water port for the Russian Federation.[141]

Still, Ukraine remains strategically located along the main transit route for Russian gas and oil, which supplies energy to Europe. This position has economically benefited Ukraine (with reduced prices for gas and oil) and politically (with close relations with the Russian Federation). On the other hand, the country's status as a transit region also has brought Ukraine numerous problems (e.g., Russia-Ukraine oil crisis of 2006 and 2009, as well as recent military conflicts that threatened Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity). Thus, the United States and the European Union are interested in increasing Ukraine's role and cooperation in the important energy corridor of the Black and Caspian seas; this intention is not favorable for the Russian Federation and puts Ukraine in the viewfinder of the great powers.[142]

4.   Romania

Located on the coast between Bulgaria and Ukraine in Southeastern Europe, with direct access to the Black Sea, Romania is one of the main players in the Black Sea Basin.[143] As a member of NATO and the European Union, the country actively participates in numerous Black Sea security and cooperation programs. Its role is significant in the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC), South-East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP), Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA), Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), BLACKSEAFOR, and Black Sea Harmony. Also, Romania tries largely to be involved in EU projects in the Black Sea region, such as the Black Sea

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[141] Ioana Tudor, "Losing Crimea, Prevent Ukraine to Become Energy Independent and then a Threat to the Status of Russia's Dominant Energy Supplier for Europe," March 17, 2014, *ZF Business International*, http://www.zf ro/business-international/pierderea-crimeei-va-impiedica-ucraina-sa-devina-independenta-energetic-si-apoi-o-amenintare-pentru-statutul-rusiei-de-furnizor-dominant-de-energie-pentru-europa-12274644.

[142] Barry R. Posen, "Ukraine: Part of America's 'Vital Interests'?," *The National Interest*, http://nationalinterest.org/feature/ukraine-part-americas-vital-interests-10443.

[143] Central Intelligence Agency, "Romania," *World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ro.html.

Synergy project, Black Sea Fund, and BSEC improvements. Romania specified its role in the Black Sea Basin in its white paper on National Security and Defense.[144]

Romania's unique position at the junction of the Black and the Mediterranean seas, known as the "southern flank of NATO,"[145] is strategically important for controlling key transit routes along the Danube River to and from central, southeastern, and Western Europe.[146] In addition to opportunities for commerce and control, the country's location also is a source of high-risk transboundary threats from the Caucasus, the Caspian, and Central Asia, prejudiced by frozen conflicts in the CIS (Moldova, Georgia), and the amplification of asymmetric threats, drug and human trafficking, migration, and terrorism.[147] Romania's role defining the expanding boundaries of NATO and the European Union contributes significantly to its national security and to the stability beyond its borders.[148]

The geostrategic importance of the Black Sea Basin, brought to international attention by the recent Russian-Ukrainian conflict, is likely to increase Romania's role in the Wider Black Sea region, especially in the context of the start of building a missile defense facility in October 2013 in Deveselu; this facility is the foundation of the NATO missile shield elements.[149] Also, Romania's unique position of controlling the Danube access routes, a key river transit path to and from central, southeastern, and Western

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[144] Romania, Decision of the Supreme Council of National Defense: *Defense White Paper No. 77* (2013): 10–11.

[145] Jim Garamone, "NATO Defense Chiefs to Discuss Russia, Afghanistan," U.S. Department of Defense, http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=122290.

[146] Titus Corlăţean, "Romania Actively Participates in the Implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia," Romania Ministry of Foreign Affairs, http://www.mae ro/node/27777.

[147] DRAO, "Security Trends in the Black Sea," Military Articles: The Black Sea, http://www.drao ro/articole/military/geopolitic%C4%83/regiunea-m%C4%83rii-negre/tendin%C8%9Be-de-securitate-%C3%AEn-zona-bazinului-m%C4%83rii-negre html.

[148] Ibid.

[149] NATO, "Newsroom," http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news104549 htm?selectedLocale=en; Romania – United States bilateral agreement, which stipulates building the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense system at Deveselu, Olt County. The system incorporates the missile defense radar and interceptors. This base will be a component of NATO's Ballistic Missile Defense system, operated and controlled by NATO and is planned to be operational in 2015.

Europe, increases its role.[150] For Romania, maintaining both internal and regional security are required conditions for political and economic development.[151]

5.   Bulgaria

Situated between Romania and Turkey in Southeastern Europe, Bulgaria's strategic position next to the Turkish Straits controls key land routes connecting Europe to the Middle East and Asia.[152] Bulgaria also is a member of NATO and the European Union. The military training facilities on Bulgarian territory—e.g., the Novo Selo polygon,[153] Bezmer base,[154] Graf Ignatievo airfield,[155] and Logistics Center Aitos[156]—highlight the country's contribution to regional security.[157]

Accordingly, Bulgaria is one of the leading nations in the cooperation programs in the Black Sea Basin. Bulgaria has played a leading role in BSEC, since its founding in 1992 as the main program in the Black Sea.[158] Besides participating with the European Union in various regional security programs (e.g., OSCE, Black Sea Forum initiative, European Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), European Neighborhood Policy (ENP),

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[150] Corlățean, "Romania Actively Participates in the Implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia."

[151] Andreea Țilea and Marius Dincă, "European Strategy in the Black Sea," Geopolitics.ro, http://geopolitics ro/strategia-europeana-la-marea-neagra/.

[152] Central Intelligence Agency, "Bulgaria," World Factbook, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bu.html.

[153] Novo Selo Polygon is a joint Bulgarian - U.S military training facility, which trains NATO troops forces in the region and other countries that share common Euro-Atlantic principles and contribute to regional security.

[154] Bezmer Air Base is a U.S military facility in Bulgaria, located in the proximity of Yambol, and near to Bolyarsko.

[155] Graf Ignatievo Air Base is located in Graf Ignatievo, which is a region in Plovdiv. It is a military airport and currently the single fighter air base in Bulgaria, which is largely used by U.S. troops and NATO forces.

[156] The Logistic Center Aitos, situated closer to the town of Aitos, is a joint Bulgaria – U.S. military logistic facility, aimed to supply the Novo Selo polygon.

[157] Bulgaria Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Minister Vigenin Met with the Assistant Secretary General of NATO, Terry Stamatopoulos," Ministry of Foreign Affairs News, http://www.mfa.bg/en/events/6/1/1377/index html.

[158] Bulgaria Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The European Perspective and the Regional Cooperation are Important for the Future of South East Europe," Ministry of Foreign Affairs News, http://www.mfa.bg/en/events/6/1/1403/index html.

etc.), Bulgaria has an important tourist industry that contributes significantly to its economy.[159]

In terms of energy security, the country operates both electrical and nuclear plants, and is crossed by a main transit route for transporting Russian natural gas to Europe. Although currently stalled because of the conflict in Ukraine, when completed, the planned Gazprom project "South Stream" will further contribute to Bulgaria's leadership role in the Black Sea Basin.[160]

6.   Georgia

Flanking the Black Sea, between Russia and Turkey, Georgia is located in Southwestern Asia. Parts of the country (e.g., its northern Caucasus) extend to the European continent. With 310 kilometers of coastline along the Black Sea, Georgia controls most of the Caucasus Mountains and the pathways through them.[161]

To avoid energy dependence on the Russian Federation, Georgia in 2007 began importing gas from Azerbaijan, and today continues to import most of its natural gas from that country. Only 10 percent of its gas is provided by Russia at no cost due to Georgia's role as a transit country for the Russian North-South Pipeline to Armenia.[162] After the Russian-Georgian armed conflict in 2008,[163] the Russian Federation established several military bases in the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia.

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[159] Marin Lessenski, "The Black Sea Cooperation: An Outlook from Bulgaria," *Xenophon Paper,* No. 2, 38–50.

[160] Stanley Reed, "A Conduit for Russian Gas, Tangled in Europe's Conflicts: South Stream Pipeline Project in Bulgaria is Delayed," *New York Times*, July 1, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/01/business/international/south-stream-pipeline-project-in-bulgaria-is-delayed.html?_r=1.

[161] Central Intelligence Agency, "Georgia," World Factbook, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gg.html.

[162] Molly Corso, "Georgia: No Plans to Import More Russian Gas," Natural Gas Europe, http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/georgia-russian-gas-imports.

[163] The Russian Georgian conflict lasted for five days (August 7–12, 2008), and was focused on South Ossetia and Abkhazia (two separatist regions officially part of Georgia and supported by the Russian Federation).

Currently, the Russian Federation still controls these separatists' unrecognized regions.[164]

Despite the existing conflict, which has become frozen, Georgia continues to develop a real market economy and integrate into Western institutions. The country's main objective is joining NATO and the European Union.[165] Since signing the association agreement with the European Union on June 27, 2014, Georgia joined the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA).[166] Georgia also participates in GUAM, BSEC, and OSCE, through which the country contributes to regional security in the Black Sea Basin.[167]

In terms of major security challenges, Georgia remains determined to restore its territorial sovereignty over Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, the settlement of its "frozen conflict" largely depends on Georgian relations with the Russia Federation, which has supported the secessionist provinces and categorically opposes Georgia's intentions to join NATO.[168] Nevertheless, presence of a much larger neighbor and the existence of unsettled conflicts on its territory, as well as the recent crisis in Ukraine, may make alignment with the institutions of Western Europe the country's best option for internal and regional security.[169]

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[164] Luke Coffey, "Georgia and Russia: The Occupation Too Many Have Forgotten," *Daily Signal,* May 31, 2012, http://dailysignal.com/2012/05/31/georgia-and-russia-the-occupation-too-many-have-forgotten/.

[165] Office of the State Minister of Georgia on European &Euro-Atlantic Integration, "Georgia and EU, Georgia and NATO," Georgian Government, http://www.eu-nato.gov.ge/en.

[166] The Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) is an agreement between the EU and Georgia with preferential trade relationship, based on common advantageous treatment, giving mutual access to their markets than that offered to other trade partners.

[167] Office of the State Minister of Georgia on European &Euro-Atlantic Integration, "Georgia EU Cooperation," Georgian Government, http://www.eu-nato.gov.ge/en/eu/cooperation.

[168] Georgia, "2013 Report," The Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, Georgian Government, http://www.smr.gov.ge/docs/doc290.pdf.

[169] Zaal Anjaparidze, "Georgia Needs NATO Now More Than Ever," *Moscow Times*, http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/georgia-needs-nato-now-more-than-ever/503774 html.

C. THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ACTORS IN POLITICS, ECONOMICS, AND SECURITY

The key international players in the Black Sea Basin are the United States, the European Union, NATO, and CIS. A number of other organizations also operate in the region, such as GUAM, SEECP, OSCE, BSEC, and RCC. All of these countries and organizations have their own political, economic, and security agendas. If some of them are trying to create a common security environment, promote democracy, and support their partners, others are watching for more convenient and effective economical alternatives to ensure their energy security. The common interest of all is to cooperate and establish regional stability and security.[170]

1. United States

The United States is one of the main international actors interested in establishing regional security and stability in the Black Sea Basin.[171] Its foreign policy is focused on the energy resources in the Black and Caspian seas, and on the democratization of the post-Soviet countries in the region (Ukraine, Georgia, and Republic of Moldova). The 2008 Russian-Georgian clash[172] and the 2014 Ukrainian conflict[173] have increased the role of the United States for providing regional stability, which also is important for ensuring security for Europe. The U.S. government also gives special attention to supporting regional cooperation, as well as fighting corruption, organized crime, and terrorism.[174]

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[170] Eugen Lungu, "NATO Summit in Chicago and the New Dynamics of Military Security in the Black Sea Region," Policy Sphere Global Security, http://www.sferapoliticii.ro/sfera/170/art15-Lungu.php.

[171] Mitat Celikpala, Commission on the Black Sea: Security in the Black Sea Region: Policy Report II," Bertelsmann Stiftung, http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/bst/en/media/xcms_bst_dms_30921_30922_2.pdf.

[172] BBC, "Russia-Georgia Conflict," BBC News, January 19, 2010, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_depth/europe/2008/georgia_russia_conflict/default.stm.

[173] BBC News, "Malaysian Jet Crashes in East Ukraine Conflict Zone," *BBC News*, July17, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28354856.

[174] Dimitrios Triantaphyllo, *The Security Context in the Black Sea Region* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 79–80.

The role of the United States in the Black Sea began to expand after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Implementation of various security projects through NATO, Partnership for Peace (PfP), the European Union, and OSCE had a common goal of providing peace and stability in the region. The constructive evolution of the frozen conflicts and the efforts to identify a peaceful settlement and compromise are part of these projects.[175] The U.S. position in the Black Sea concerning security is clear:

> From the U.S. point of view, NATO is and will remain the premier provider of security for the Euro-Atlantic region, which includes the Black Sea. Far from seeking to charge into the region, the U.S. approach is to work with its Allies and friends, and within the frameworks they find comfortable, to strengthen cooperation and collaboration on security. The U.S. is not seeking to establish a permanent naval presence in the Black Sea, but it is committed to engaging with its allies and friends to enhance security and cooperation throughout the region.[176]

Moreover, energy issues in the region are a priority of the U.S. government. The United States promotes several options to secure Europe energy and expand the gas supply, avoiding Russian gas supremacy. One of these projects is the Nabucco pipeline.[177] The Russian Federation promotes its own project, the South Stream pipeline, targeting approximately the same European states, which raises energy disputes on more than a regional level.[178] In this context the Black Sea Basin has become a buffer zone between Russia and the European Union, where the United States is trying to implement its policy and promote its interests.[179]

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[175] Ross Wilson, "U.S. Policy in the Black Sea Region," Ambassador of the U.S. to Ankara Speech at the ARI Movement's 9th Annual Security Conference Summer 2006, *Turkish Policy Quarterly* (Summer 2006): 2–3. http://www.turkishpolicy.com/article/660/us-policy-in-the-black-sea-region-summer-2006/.

[176] Ibid., 1.

[177] Triantaphyllo, *The Security Context in the Black Sea Region*, 80–83.

[178] Ibid.

[179] Roberto D. Kaplan, "Europe's New Map," *The American Interest,* April 12, 2013, http://www.the-american-interest.com/articles/2013/04/12/europes-new-map/.

2.   European Union

The European Union has direct access to the Black Sea with the accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007. Through implementing various security and energy projects, its strategic role in this region has increased significantly. These projects include Black Sea Synergy, BSEC, SELEC, SEECP, CEFTA, Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), BLACKSEAFOR, and Black Sea Harmony.[180]

In the context of expansion eastward, the European Union is particularly concerned about regional stability in the Black Sea Basin benefiting energy-supply routes bypassing the Russian Federation.[181] To promote regional stability, the European Union participates in various peacekeeping missions and is actively involved in solving area conflicts. Within the framework of the EU Common Security and Defense Policy, the European Union has supported military and civilian missions in the region, including EUFOR ALTHEA in Bosnia Herzegovina (2004)[182] and EULEX in Kosovo (2008).[183] The European Union is testing its own capabilities to react and control outbreaks of conflict in Europe.[184] The success of this strategy can be seen in the 2008 Russian-Georgian conflict, where the European Union served as a firm mediator in drawing the six-point ceasefire agreement, establishing the EUMM[185] Georgia mission.[186]

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[180] European Union External Actions," Black Sea Synergy," Regional Policy, http://eeas.europa.eu/blacksea/index_en.htm.

[181] European Commission, "Sea Basin Strategy: Black Sea, Blue Growth Infographic," Maritime Affairs, http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/blue_growth/infographics/#_Black_Sea.

[182] The EUFOR ALTHEA – European Union Force is a military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina started on December 2, 2004. Operation is led by the EU under CSDP, with the mission to provide capacity-building and training support for Bosnia and Herzegovina forces in maintaining a safe and secure environment.

[183] The EULEX - European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo is one of the largest civilian missions under CSDP. Launched in February 2008, the mission is to assist and support the Kosovo government in the law and judiciary field.

[184] Security and Defense CSDP, "Ongoing Missions and Operations," European Union External Actions, http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/index_en htm.

[185] The EUMM stands for European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia. It is an autonomous mission, which started in September 2008, and is conducted by the EU under the EU Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP).

[186] Georgia, "The Six-Point Ceasefire Agreement of August 12, 2008," The Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, http://www.smr.gov.ge/index.php?opt=11.

As a regional and global actor, the "EU promotes integration as a means to support peace and prosperity and to overcome conflicts around the world."[187] Its role in the region becomes more prominent and decisive as its community grows. The European Union also is one of the most active actors contributing to the security in the area, jointly with its friends, international organizations, and strategic partners.[188]

3. NATO

NATO plays both a political and military role in the Black Sea Basin—promoting "democracy, regional cooperation, and the peaceful resolution of disputes."[189]

> If diplomatic efforts fail, it has the military capacity needed to undertake crisis-management operations. These are carried out under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty—NATO's founding treaty—or under a UN mandate, alone or in cooperation with other countries and international organizations.[190]

NATO has been involved in the Black Sea Basin since 1952, when Turkey joined the organization. The region has become more important to NATO since the collapse of the Soviet Union and expanded access. States within the Black Sea Basin first started cooperating with NATO through the Partnership for Peace program (PfP)[191] and various security projects focusing on the Black Sea Basin.[192]

NATO's interest in the Black Sea increased substantially following the September 11, 2001, New York terrorist attacks. Taking into consideration that the threats originated from the Greater Middle East, in proximity of Europe, the Black Sea Basin found itself

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[187] European Union External Actions, "Conflict Prevention, Peace Building and Mediation," Conflict Prevention, http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/conflict_prevention/index_en htm.

[188] Ibid.

[189] NATO, "What is NATO, the Political and Military Alliance," NATO Welcome, http://www.nato.int/nato-welcome/index html.

[190] Ibid.

[191] The Partnership for Peace (PfP) is a practical bilateral cooperation program between the Euro-Atlantic partner countries and NATO. It facilitates partners to strengthen their individual relationship with NATO, proposing their own objectives for cooperation. This program was launched in 1994, with the aim of increasing stability and security, as well as fight against various threats, jointly with Euro-Atlantic partners and partner countries.

[192] Volodymyr Dubovyk, "NATO's Role in the Wider Black Sea Area," *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo*, no. 11 (2008): 1–2.

within Western security policy. Now with three Black Sea Basin countries in its structure (Turkey, Romania, and Bulgaria), as well as other regional partners (Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Republic of Moldova),[193] NATO has become one of the main security providers in the region.[194]

Recognizing the importance of the Black Sea Basin in the 2004 Istanbul NATO summit[195] and those that followed, NATO became a core regional actor in fighting against terrorism and the trafficking of arms, drugs, and humans.[196] Several multiple security cooperation projects in the region have included the Naval Cooperation Task Force in the Black Sea (BLACKSEAFOR) and the Black Sea Harmony (OBSH).[197]

With the recent conflict over Ukraine, and several frozen conflicts in the Black Sea Basin (e.g., Transnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia), NATO itself argues its mission fully. Its role in the region is central, despite the Franco-German reluctance to seeing an extensive development of NATO in the Black Sea Basin.[198] One thing is certain: besides major players in the Black Sea Basin (Russian Federation, European Union), NATO comes as a powerful player set to ensure the security of its members and balance the power in the region.

4.   CIS

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)—created in December 1991 by the Russian Federation, Belarus, and Ukraine (Sodruzhestvo Nezavisimykh Gosudarstv)—originally consisted of 12 former independent countries of the Soviet

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[193] Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), "NATO Member Countries and the Following Partner Countries," NATO Organizations, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/51288.htm.

[194] Marat Terterov and George Niculescu, "The Evolution of European and Euro-Atlantic Policy Making in the Wider Black Sea: EU And NATO Attempts at Strengthening Regionalism in an Area of Strategic Interest," *European Geopolitical Forum*, Brussels (2012): 10–12.

[195] Romanian's Permanent Delegation to NATO, "Black Sea," Romania in NATO, http://nato.mae.ro/node/178.

[196] Ibid.

[197] Alexandros Petersen, "Black Sea Security: The NATO Imperative," Global Europe Program, Wilson Center, http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/black-sea-security-the-nato-imperative.

[198] George Vlad Niculescu, "Briefing on: 'The Role of NATO in the Wider Black Sea,' International Conference, "Regional Security Dynamics in the South Caucasus" (Yerevan, November 17–18, 2011), 4, http://gpf-europe.com/upload/iblock/d06/george_yerevan_brief.pdf.

Union (i.e., Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Republic of Moldova). Other former Soviet states (including Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia) refused to join the CIS, which is headquartered in Minsk, Belarus.[199]

The mission of the CIS is to organize and coordinate foreign relations, defense, environmental protection, law enforcement, immigration, and economic policies among its members. The head of member states and their prime ministers create the CIS council assisted by resort ministries.[200] Despite considerable efforts to have a common security framework throughout CIS countries, this objective has not been met. Seen by Moscow as a "personal" project, CIS has been used to exert political, economic, and military influence in former Soviet states through the use of peacekeeping forces and other tactics.[201] Following the five-day Russian–Georgian conflict in 2008, Georgia withdrew from the CIS.[202]

After the Georgian exit from the CIS, the organization has lost credibility and strength, with the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine refocusing their efforts on joining Europe.[203] The role of CIS in the regional security of the Black Sea Basin is not significant, and CIS is considered "virtually moribund as a political organization,"[204] The CIS also lacks economic and military influence, compared to other international actors exerting influence in the Black Sea Basin.[205]

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[199] Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), "About Commonwealth Countries," CIS STAT, http://www.cisstat.com/index html.

[200] Ibid.

[201] Global Security, "Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)," Military Global Security.org, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/int/cis.htm.

[202] European Dialog, "Georgia Quits ex-Soviet 'Commonwealth,'" European Energy Security and Related Issues: In-Depth Analytical Coverage, http://eurodialogue.eu/Georgia-quits-ex-Soviet-commonwealth.

[203] *Timpul* (magazine), "Analysis: Russia Pushes Moldova and Ukraine Out of the CIS and Europe Itself?," *Timpul.md,* http://www.timpul md/articol/analiza-rusia-impinge-moldova-si-ucraina-afara-din-csi-si-pe-sine-din-europa-48696 html.

[204] Global Security, "Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)," Military Global Security.org.

[205] Ibid.

D.   CONCLUSION AND PROSPECTS

In this time of global and regional change, the security situation in the Black Sea Basin will continue to increasingly influence the security on the European continent, and even throughout the Euro-Atlantic region. The political and military dimension of this cooperation bears a decisive character in the security architecture of the 21st century. The Black Sea, as well as its extended area, are a source of wealth and have a strategic significance for regional and international actors.[206]

However, the existing security threats in the Black Sea Basin are a barrier to the region's multilateral development. These risks started with the security challenges arising after the reconstruction of ex-Soviet states, in a context of maintaining social harmony among various religious and ethnic groups, preserving territorial integrity, developing economic capacity, and securing energy supplies. Among all high-risk threats to security and stability, the "frozen conflicts" remain the main danger. These conflicts, which could escalate at any time, also are located in areas plagued by terrorist organizations, organized crime, and human and arms trafficking, thus creating instability in the Black Sea Basin. A collective contribution of the countries is essential to ensure a safe and secure environment. Assistance from international actors is necessary, even if their actions depend largely on their own political or economic interests in the region.

In the context of energy conflicts and interests, combining the political and military dimensions, the Black Sea Basin became a central platform of diplomatic energy disputes between regional actors. Russian energy domination thwarts Europe's desire to provide energy security for its community, as well as U.S. strategic interests, and makes the Black Sea Basin the point of intersection for the interests of the main global players. The region's energy security depends on future energy alternatives, which involve cooperation, coordination, and stability. The objective requires the involvement of all the actors.

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[206] European Commission, "Sea Basin Strategy: Black Sea," Maritime Affairs, http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/sea_basins/black_sea/index_en htm.

The EU and NATO enlargement, as well as democratization of different countries in Eastern Europe, will contribute significantly to the security balance in the Black Sea region. Also, joint energy exploitation of the region, between supply-consuming countries and transit states, could increase the security, as well as solve and prevent future regional conflicts. The current military conflict over Ukraine highlights once again the security fragility of this area. Involvement of the European Union and NATO in the solving process is considered by Russia a threat to its security. Also, since the Russian Federation is still a key Black Sea player, divergence between these powers will perpetuate a tense situation in the region.

Finally, the Black Sea Basin can develop into a sphere of regional economic, political, and military cooperation or a confrontation stage between regional and international players. Security in the region depends on the identification of answers and solutions to the existing regional problems, which is not dependent on the strength and capabilities of a single state but requires the common effort of all the states in the Black Sea Basin and international actors.

III.   REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA NATIONAL SECURITY AND ITS GEOPOLITICAL POSITION

The international security architecture has undergone major changes since the Soviet Union collapsed. Countries that only yesterday were a component of the Soviet Union have found themselves independent, but with complex political, economic, military, and security problems. The Republic of Moldova was one of the "new" states that emerged after this historic event.

In order to maintain their hard-earned status and ensure security, the former Soviet countries began to join different communities, military blocs, and international organizations. Countries of Central and Southeastern Europe largely chose the EU's democratic values and NATO, taking into consideration the cost of ensuring their own security. Some Eastern Europe states decided to remain neutral and be part of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), with Russia at its center.

Poised between the emerging alliance blocs, the Republic of Moldova followed its own course. Article 11 of the country's constitution declared its permanent neutrality,[207] less out of genuine popular enthusiasm for neutrality than to account for the reality of the Transnitrian conflict and difficult geopolitical setting.

Since its independence in 1991, the Moldovan government has established different relationships with its neighboring countries, regional states, and international actors, concerning its security. As a state with European aspirations, Moldova is restructuring its government systems and is willing to contribute more actively to regional security. Implementation of new reforms in the national legislative, economic, military, and security sectors, as well as drawing various security strategies are some of the key measures in this regard.[208]

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[207] Moldova's Constitution, Article 11, Adopted on July 29, 1994, Justice.md (this translation by the author), http://lex.justice md/document_rom.php?id=44B9F30E:7AC17731.

[208] European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, "Moldova Strategy," EBRD Countries, http://www.ebrd.com/pages/country/moldova/strategy.shtml.

Currently, Moldova is facing a security problem oscillating between East and West and guaranteeing the sovereignty and territorial integrity. The available security options, embodied in Moldova's constitution, are not many. Also, those options result from geopolitical setting, political and diplomatic issues, social and ethnic problems, energy dependence, as well as the existing frozen conflict on its territory. This chapter will explore the national security strategy that Moldova has, its energy security issues, and three frozen conflicts in the territory of the former Soviet Union, specifically related to their impact on regional security.

A.   NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY IN A SMALL STATE

The few security options available to the Republic of Moldova are defined by its geopolitical setting, energy dependence, and political and diplomatic history, which include unresolved frozen conflicts that threaten the nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity. For smaller states, drawing a security strategy becomes extremely challenging. Relatively limited power and resources frequently force these countries to adjust and reassess their approach to national security. Usually, the national interests of states crisscross with other regional or international security systems. Therefore, small states are forced to rethink their national security strategies for achieving their objectives. Moldova is one of these strategic innovators.

1.   Republic of Moldova National Security Strategy

The Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, adopted on July 29, 1994, serves as the legal basis for developing and implementing the nation's security and defense.[209] Amidst political controversy,[210] particularly relating to establishing closer ties with NATO, the Republic of Moldova adopted its first National Security Strategy on July 15,

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[209] Republic of Moldova Constitution, Justice md., http://lex.justice md/document_rom.php?id=44B9F30E:7AC17731.

[210] Andrei Iovu, "National Security Strategy, Recommendations for National Security Strategy Implementation Process," Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Geneva: Institute for Public Policy 2011.

2011.[211] Now mandatory in democratic countries, the National Security Strategy (NSS)—also called the National Strategy or Grand Strategy—is a policy act that identifies major national security threats and specifies counter-actions. Depending on the state's national interests and security system, the National Security policy is also called a Concept, Strategy, Defense Doctrine, National Security Directive, or White Paper on Security and Defense. Such documents are important for "developing, applying, and coordinating the instruments of national power (diplomatic, economic, military, and informational) to achieve objectives that contribute to national security."[212]

Moldova's National Security Strategy is based on the National Security Concept,[213] which was adopted by parliament in May 2008. Starting from the idea that Moldova's security is closely connected with that of other European countries and cannot be achieved alone, the National Security Strategy includes guidelines and security actions on a four- to seven-year term.[214]

> The strategy is also a medium term political and legal act that allows adaptation to internal and external developments in national security policy. Identifying specific segments of the national security system that require reform and developing a realistic plan of reform implementations.[215]

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[211] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova, "Decision no. 153 of the Parliament of Republic of Moldova on July 15, 2011," Moldovan Parlament, (this translation by the author), http://lex.justice md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=340510.

[212] Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, "National Security Strategy," Free Dictionary, http://www.thefreedictionary.com/national+security+strategy.

[213] National Security Concept of the Republic of Moldova reflects the overall assessment of the security environment at the national and international level. The security concept defines national security purposes, the guidelines for basic national security, and the values and general principles to be protected by the Moldovan society. Also, the National Security Concept of the Republic of Moldova is considered a system of ideas that shape national security state priorities.

[214] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova, "Decision no. 153 of the Parliament of Republic of Moldova on July 15, 2011," Moldovan Parliament, (this translation by the author), http://lex.justice md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=340510.

[215] Ibid.

The strategy stipulates the legal framework for the divisions and subdivisions of the national security system, which must accord with the national security objectives, including:

> respect for the rule of law and the rules of human rights, institution building and democratic principles in the country, economic growth, ensuring civilian control over armed forces and force structures, implementing the principle of demilitarization in the institutions that have responsibilities for defense. Promote good relations with neighboring states, and proper protection of classified information. The strategy also includes actions needed in other areas of importance to national security, such as health, environment, education, and the fight against corruption.[216]

According to the NSS, the fundamental interests of the Republic of Moldova are ensuring its sovereignty and territorial integrity, respecting and protecting human rights and freedoms, and defending its independence.[217]

Once the Republic of Moldova had a National Security Strategy in place, the state institutions, which ensure state security, also had a clear mission in this regard. However, taking into consideration the geopolitical situation and country size, the need for flexibility and continuous adjustments of the NSS are necessary for facing new security threats. Also, a separate chapter, Chapter 3, is devoted to the National Security Strategy's vision and actions to reinforce national security through foreign and defense policy. The National Security Strategy specifies that:

> [A] special place in the context of security lies in Moldova's participation in global efforts, regional and sub-regional, to promote international stability and security cooperation within the UN, OSCE, NATO, and other relevant international organizations and participation missions under the Common Security and Defense Policy of the EU (CSDP).[218]

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[216] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova, "Decision no. 153 of the Parliament of Republic of Moldova on July 15, 2011," (this translation by the author).

[217] Ibid.

[218] Ibid.

However, the state's institutions that are responsible for development and implementation of National Security and Defense policy are the Moldovan Parliament, the President of the Republic of Moldova, the Supreme Security Council, the government, and ministries.

Current approval of the National Security Strategy gives to the Republic of Moldova a new phase in security and defense policy, which initiates suitable reforms in this field and implementation of standards and practices. The modernization and adjustment of the legal framework is a key reform in this regard.[219] Initiation and implementation of various security measurements, stipulated in the NSS, will demonstrate the determination and political will of the state to deal with actions that threaten the Moldova's National Security.

Different national and international security experts have criticized Moldova's National Security Strategy.[220] The main issues are related to the absence of an external dimension, and particularly the role and missions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova in this framework.[221] In general, the National Security Strategy, the first of its kind, details a specific approach of a small country with developing democratic tendencies, and addresses the security problem in terms of its European evolution. The neutrality notions are persistent and interconnected with all of Moldova's security options. Finally, the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova displays the progress of Moldovan society and outlines the essential adjustments and transition to a democratic state, obeying the country's constitution is the main objective of maintaining independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

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[219] Intelligence and Security Service of Republic of Moldova, "Reforms," SIS.md, http://www.sis md/ro/reforma.

[220] Iulian Chifu, "Concept and National Security Strategy of Moldova," Security Studies, Wordpress, http://studiidesecuritate.wordpress.com/2013/07/04/conceptia-si-strategia-de-securitate-nationala-in-republica-moldova/.

[221] Ibid.

2.   Moldova's Energy Security

After transitioning to a market economy following independence, the Republic of Moldova became dependent on external energy providers. In terms of energy security, the government has focused on the supply and pricing of "oil, natural gas, solid fuel, and electrical and thermal energy."[222] The solutions in this respect have differed and sometimes conflicted with one another; however, they all had the final goal of the independence and energy security of the Republic of Moldova.[223]

Energy security is conceived in principle as supplying the country with energy resources and at the lowest price possible.[224] Reality does not match the options that Moldova has in this regard. For Moldova to achieve energy security, the country must diversify its supply to overcome dependence on Russia Federation. By diversifying the supply options Moldova also will improve its negotiating position to obtain resources and lower more competitive prices. In turn, access to lower-cost energy resources will contribute to the country's overall national security.

Designed in the Soviet Union era, the Republic of Moldova's energy industry was a part of the energy system of the USSR. Its energy infrastructure was intended and built to supply resources to the entire Soviet space, not solely for Moldova. This infrastructure can be observed especially in the existing electricity sector, which cannot cover the entire energy demand of Moldova. While a supplying infrastructure exists in other energy sectors (e.g., oil and gas), since Moldova lacks its own natural resources and imports 98 percent of its needs.[225]

Further complicating energy security, since 1992 the Republic of Moldova has lost control of Soviet supply routes in 11 percent of its territory on the left bank of the Dniester River, where Transnistrian separatists control important energy transportation

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[222] Virgiliu Mihailescu, *Moldova's Energy Security in the Context of Accession to the Energy Community* (Chisinau: Foundation Soros-Moldova Bons Offices, 2010), 10.

[223] Ibid., 11.

[224] Ibid.

[225] Ibid., 13.

routes and infrastructure, including a compressor station and central gas pipelines.[226] Figure 9 highlights these segments:

Figure 9.   The Moldova Gaz Network.[227]

The Republic of Moldova's energy infrastructure is a component of the "Balkan export corridor carrying Russian gas to Europe—[which] transited 17.9 bcm (billion cubic meters) of Russian gas to Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and western Turkey in 2009."[228] Thus, the full "transit capacity of the network is 43–44 bcm/year."[229] However,

[226] Alexandru Baltag, "Russia's Energy Weapon as an Instrument of Pressure and Influence in the Former Soviet Union (the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine)," APE Foreign Policy Association, http://ape md/.

[227] Katja Yafimava, *The Transit Dimension of EU Energy Security: Russian Gas Transit across Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), Map 8.1: The Moldovan Gas Network, 263 (original source: Pirani (ed.), *Russian and CIS Gas Markets).*

[228] Yafimava, *The Transit Dimension of EU Energy Security: Russian Gas Transit across Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova*, 262.

supplying the domestic and industrial consumers' demand with natural gas has become a national issue for the Republic of Moldova, because Russia's Gazprom controls the entire transit and distribution system of natural gas in Moldova's territory. In addition to its economic leverage, Gazprom manipulates the price and supply of gas to influence Moldova's decisions. This pressure by the Russian Federation on the internal and external processes of the country severely affects the energy security of the Republic of Moldova, making it vulnerable to Russian interests.[230]

The Republic of Moldova is largely dependent on Russian energy resources. The economy works almost exclusively on these resources, which makes it vulnerable if Russia uses energy to promote its interests in Moldova. The Republic of Moldova has a strong need to diversify the energy resources import infrastructure, an action that requires strong political will and external assistance. The use of non-traditional methods of generating electricity (wind and sun), and connection to EU energy projects are viable solutions in this sense.[231] These options should be explored not least because there is less probability that any one of several planned gas and oil projects (e.g., Nabucco, South Stream) will transit Moldova's territory. So finding alternative energy sources is a strategic priority of the Republic of Moldova.[232] Solutions that will diminish Russian influence in Moldova, increase diplomatic and political maneuvering ability of the country to act in various disputes with Russia, and strengthen the sovereignty and independence level of external actors will pave the way to achieving its national interests and security options.

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[229] Yafimava, *The Transit Dimension of EU Energy Security: Russian Gas Transit across Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova*, 262, quoted in V. Socor, "Gazprom Touts Agreements with Moldova as Models," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 4 January 2007.

[230] Alexandru Baltag and Dorina Baltag, "Republic of Moldova Energy Security: Viable Alternatives," Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) "*Viitorul,*" Public Policy, no. 3 (2009), http://old.viitorul.org/public/2118/ro/STUDIU_ENERGETICA.pdf.

[231] Ibid., 35–40.

[232] Republic of Moldova Government, "Energy Strategy of the Republic of Moldova Until 2030," Decision no. 102, Justice.md, http://lex.justice.md/md/346670/.

B. REGIONAL CONFLICTS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON MOLDOVA'S NATIONAL SECURITY

The Black Sea Basin, South Caucasus, and the Balkans are characterized by numerous tensions and conflicts (Transnistria, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and Nagorno-Karabakh), involving different countries and various international security organizations. Keeping these conflicts unsettled is also an object of geostrategic blackmail, creating separatist regimes in those areas and perfect conditions for smuggling, illegal migration, and crime. These and other risks are connected in time, as asymmetric, conventional, and non-military. For the Republic of Moldova, the existence of a frozen conflict in its territory for more than 24 years has significantly harmed the country's security and multilateral development.

1. Transnistrian Conflict

The Transnistrian conflict is a dispute that started in March 1991, between Moldovan legal forces and the separatist region. The self-proclaimed "Dniestr Republic," also now called the Moldavian Transnistrian region, (Figure 10) was created in 1990 by ethnic Russians. The active phase of the conflict lasted less than a year and resulted in hundreds of deaths and the destruction of homes and infrastructure. In July 1992, a ceasefire was declared and the Transnistrian conflict became a "frozen conflict," establishing a "security zone" and a peacekeeping mission on the Dniester River. The peacekeeping forces have more than 400 personnel from four sides (Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, and Transnistrian separatists). Also, a solving mechanism for this conflict was created, represented by the 5+2 format of the negotiation process. The five mediators and two observers in the negotiation process are: the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, the OSCE, and Transnistria, with the United States and European Union with observer status.[233]

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[233] Woehrel, *Moldova: Background and U.S. Policy*, 3.

Source: Map Resources. Adapted by CRS.

Figure 10.   Moldova's Transnistria and Gagauz regions.[234]

The Transnistrian conflict is based not on ethnic or religious grievances, as the Transnistrian separatist regime and Russia are trying to argue, but on a fairly standard political and geopolitical conflict.[235] The Moldovan ethnic group constitutes the largest group forming 40 percent of the entire population in the region.[236]

Moldova's separatist region of Transnistria continues to be a destabilizing security factor and in Eastern Europe. Despite the efforts of the United States, European Union, and OSCE to withdraw Russian troops from Transnistria, the Russian Federation

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[234] Ibid.

[235] Olga Savceac, "Transnistria-Moldova Conflict," *ICE Case Studies*, No. 182 (May 2006), http://www1.american.edu/ted/ice/moldova htm.

[236] Woehrel, *Moldova: Background and U.S. Policy*.

considers these forces as its strategic "forward military base."[237] Russia maintains the former 14th Soviet army (currently known as the Operational Group of Russian Forces in the Transnistrian region of Moldova (OGRF)), even though according to the 1999 OSCE Istanbul summit, Russia is committed to withdraw its troops[238] from Moldovan territory.[239]

The conflict now is in a lull thanks to the more active involvement of different international security organizations. Also, Transnistria is on the agenda of the EU Security Strategy and remains an object of regional geopolitical disputes with a high risk of instability.[240] The 5+2 format is still considered the main problem-solving mechanism by the Russia, which is one of the main players in this format. However, the Moldovan President Nicolae Timofti argues that the actual format is ineffective and advocates changing this format or replacing it with a civilian mission.

> The current format of 5 +2 negotiations for settlement of the Transnistrian conflict has proved ineffective. I think it is appropriate to examine the possibility of modifying this mechanism in order to streamline the negotiations.[241]

However, transforming the military peacekeeping mission under the Russian aegis to a civilian mission under international mandate is viewed as a priority for the Moldovan government in the settlement process of the Transnistrian conflict.[242]

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[237] Ion Preasca, "Moscow Turns Transnistria in a Russian Military Base," *Adevarul.md Politics,* http://adevarul.ro/moldova/politica/moscova-transforma-transnistria-intr-o-baza-militara-rusa-1_50aeb0e97c42d5a6639f2c0f/index.html.

[238] At the OSCE summit in 1999, Russian President Boris Yeltsin pledged that the Russian military equipment would be withdrawn from Moldova's territory in 2001. Also by the end of 2002 the withdrawal of all Russian troops would follow. This action was not met until recently.

[239] Christopher J. Borgen, "Thawing a Frozen Conflict: Legal Aspects of the Separatist Crisis in Moldova a Report from the Association of the Bar of the City of New York," St. John's University School of Law, Research Paper No. 06–0045, July 25, 2006. 19, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=920151.

[240] Vladimir Socor, "Negotiations on the Transnistria Conflict in a Deep Freeze," European Dialogue, http://www.eurodialogue.eu/osce/Negotiations-On-The-Transnistria-Conflict-In-A-Deep-Freeze.

[241] Luminiţa Bogdan, "Nicolae Timofti Wants to Change the 5 + 2 Format on Transnistria: The Current Negotiation Format is Inefficient," *Mediafax.ro*, http://www.mediafax ro/externe/nicolae-timofti-vrea-modificarea-formatului-5-2-privind-transnistria-actualul-format-de-negocieri-este-ineficient-12488414.

[242] Government of Republic of Moldova, "Program of Activity for Country Reintegration," Bureau of Reintegration, http://www.gov md/slidepageview.php?l=en&idc=631.

The leadership of the Transnistrian separatists region does not give any indication that they will agree to return to the constitutional law of the Republic of Moldova. They are still engaged in an intense process of adopting Russian legislation in the Transnistrian region[243] and the pursuit of solving the conflict through recognition by the Russian Federation.[244] Despite the efforts made by all actors participating in the settlement process, the Transnistrian conflict remains unsettled and destabilizing for the Republic of Moldova and the whole region.

2. South Ossetia and Abkhazia

Separatist fighting in Ossetia since 1990 has left thousands of Georgians dead or displaced. The ceasefire agreement between Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze and Russian President Boris Yeltsin on July 24, 1992, in Sochi created separatist enclaves and brought Russian peacekeeping forces to Georgia.[245] After the Soviet Union collapsed, particularly during 1992–1993, independence movements started in the South Ossetia and Abkhazia region, intensively supported by Russia long before the dissolution of the Soviet Union.[246] Figure 11 highlights these separatist enclaves:

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[243] Moldova.org, "After the Crimea, in the Russian Composition is Asked and Transnistria," Moldova.org, http://www.moldova.org/dupa-crimeea-componenta-rusiei-se-cere-si-transnistria/.

[244] Clifford J. Levy, "Russia Backs Independence of Georgian Enclaves," *New York Times,* August 26, 2008, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/27/world/europe/27russia html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

[245] Cristian Negrea Blog, "Lessons from the 2008 Russian-Georgian Conflict," June 25, 2010, http://cristiannegrea.blogspot.com/2010/07/invatamintele-conflictului-ruso.html.

[246] Călin Hentea, "Six-Day War in Georgia," Historia ro, http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/razboiul-sase-zile-georgia.

Figure 11.   Map of Georgia with South Ossetia and Abkhazia.[247]

Contested by Russia for alleged lawlessness, the 2008 presidential election left Saakashvili in power but with a weaker political position.[248] Although Russia claimed to want an improvement in relations with Georgia, the declaration of Kosovo independence on February 17, 2008, followed by the lifting of sanctions on Abkhazia by Russia 20 days later, markedly damaged relations.[249]

Increasing Russian support of separatist enclaves in the South Ossetia and Abkhazia has worsened relations considerably, reaching a low point on August 8, 2008, when armed conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and the Russian Federation began. The conflict lasted five days and ended with a peace plan after a high-level meeting between Russia and France (Medvedev-Sarkozy 6 Point Peace Plan for the

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[247] Nations Online, "Administrative Map of Georgia," One World - Nations Online, http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/georgia_map.htm.

[248] The European Elections Monitor, "Mikheil Saakashvili is Re-elected President of the Republic of Georgia in the First Round," Foundation Robert Schuman, http://www.robert-schuman.eu/en/eem/0747-mikheil-saakashvili-is-re-elected-president-of-the-republic-of-georgia-in-the-first-round.

[249] Sergiu Căpîlnean, *Romania Reaction on the Conflict in Georgia in 2008 - A Constructivist Perspective* (Bucharest: Academy of Economic Studies, 2012), 2, http://www.academia.edu/3201503/Romania_in_conflictul_din_Georgia_din_2008.

Georgia War).[250] On August 26, 2008, Russia also recognized the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and installed military bases and checkpoints in the separatist regions.[251]

> The August 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict caused much damage to Georgia's economy and military, as well as contributing to hundreds of casualties and tens of thousands of displaced persons in Georgia. The United States quickly pledged $1 billion in humanitarian and recovery assistance for Georgia. In early 2009, the United States and Georgia signed a Strategic Partnership Charter, which pledged U.S. support for democratization, economic development, and security reforms in Georgia. The Obama Administration has provided ongoing support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.[252]

However, Georgia does not recognize the separatist regions, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and considers these territories occupied. Although committed to "solve the conflict only by peaceful means and diplomatic efforts,"[253] the Russian Federation led its first military operation in a neighboring state in this conflict, which has directly threatened the security of the country.[254] If for some states this conflict represents a challenge from the Russian Federation, for Russia it appears to be a restatement of its role as a great regional power. The Republic of Moldova's Transnistrian conflict has more in common with the Georgian separatist regions, serving as a possible threat scenario to the country's national security.

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[250] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation, "Russian MFA Information and Press Department Commentary Regarding Implementation of the Medvedev-Sarkozy Plan," MID Official Site, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4 nsf/sps/170AA7CEA77E7EFBC32574B70059F7D4.

[251] Council of Europe, "Implementation of Resolution 1633 (2008) on the Consequences of the War between Georgia and Russia," Parliamentary Assembly, http://www.coe.int/t/r/parliamentary_assembly/%5Brussian_documents%5D/%5B2009%5D/%5BJan2009%5D/Res1647_rus.asp.

[252] Jim Nichol, *Georgia [Republic]: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests* (CRS Report No. 97–727) (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, June 21, 2013), http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/97-727.pdf

[253] Council of the European Union, *HR Declaration on Behalf of the EU on the Georgian Strategy on Abkhazia and South Ossetia,* Diplomatic Papers, March 11, 2010, (Brussels, 7381/1/10 REV 1 (Presse 59), http://www.consilium.europa.eu/press/press-releases/latest-press-releases?lang=en.

[254] Cristian Negrea Blog, "Lessons from the 2008 Russian-Georgian Conflict."

3. Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

The unsettled ethnic conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, an Armenian majority enclave within the territory of Azerbaijan (Figure 12), is perhaps is the most complex and long-lasting of all the conflicts in the post-Soviet area. The conflict is between two states, Armenia and Azerbaijan, which have irreconcilable positions.[255]

Figure 12.   Map of Azerbaijan with Nagorno-Karabakh region.[256]

The separatist movements started in 1987, during the Soviet Union era. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the former Soviet countries became independent, including Armenia and Azerbaijan. In 1991, with the increased support from Armenia, the Nagorno-Karabakh proclaimed its independence in 1991, leading to the outbreak of war in 1992–1993.[257]

> The war ended in 1994, resulting in the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh by Armenia. The consequences of the war were quite serious: tens of thousands of deaths, mostly Azeri, hundreds of thousands of refugees from

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[255] Plop Andrei Blog, "The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict," January 30, 2014, http://plopandrei.blogspot.com/2014/01/coflictul-din-nagorno-karabah.html.

[256] Jim Nichol, *Azerbaijan: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests* (CRS Report 97–522), (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, February 22, 2013), http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/97-522.pdf.

[257] Teodora Măţău, "The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict," Geopolitics ro, http://geopolitics ro/conflictul-din-nagorno-karabah/.

both ethnic groups, forced to leave their homes and live in poverty. Separatists and the Armenian army continues to occupy and now an important part (about 20 percent) of the territory of Azerbaijan. Although conflict is considered frozen at the end of the war, so far about 3,000 people have died in ambushes.[258]

At the insistence of the international community, the Russian Federation and OSCE brokered a ceasefire agreement (called the Bishkek Protocol) in May 1994 among Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Nagorno-Karabakh. The document served as a starting point for the negotiation process to determine the future status of the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave.[259]

The situation in the South Caucasus remains tense, as demonstrated by recent outbreaks of violence in the region.[260] The Nagorno-Karabakh is seeking independence, while the Azerbaijan government threatens with violence if Armenia refuses to extract its troops from the region. In this context, the Russian Federation has supported the Armenians, with whom they share the Orthodox Christian faith, whereas Turkey has supported Muslim Azerbaijanis as a part of Turk Muslim ties. Because of rich natural resources in Azerbaijan, the European Union, United States, Iran, and China also have become interested, elevating the importance and danger of this conflict from a regional to an international level, with adverse effects for countries in close proximity.[261]

C.   SECURITY PROSPECTS

Moldova's security options must result from its geographical positioning and its existing capabilities. Also, the Republic of Moldova cannot ensure its own security independently. The lack of capabilities and its reduced size compared with neighboring

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[258] Ibid.

[259] Azerbaijan Republic Garabagh Region, "Agreement on Ceasefire," Garabagh Conflict, http://garabagh.net/content_176_en html.

[260] Aljazeera America, "Clashes in Nagorno-Karabakh Reignite Fears between Armenia, Azerbaijan," Aljazeera.com, August 2, 2014, http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/8/2/armenia-azerbaijanclashes html. [There were 15 deaths in the previous days of violence between Azeri forces and Armenian separatists, which brings the risk of conflict in the South Caucasus region, an area with important oil and natural gas resources crossing the Caspian region to Europe. Russia is also worried about a possible escalation of the conflict.]

[261] Măţău, "The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict."

countries, the presence of Russian troops since 1991 on Moldova territory, its geopolitical setting between the European Union and Russia, and the modern security frameworks, which encourage commune security systems, force Moldova to adjust its National Security Strategy to these standards.[262] However, the Republic of Moldova's recent National Security Strategy specifies the significance of consolidated security within the United Nations, OSCE, and NATO, and the importance of contributing to the Security and Defense Policy of the European Union.[263]

In response to NATO expansion and the aspirations of the Republic of Moldova to join the European Union, the Russian Federation has been using its economic, political, and military leverages to destabilize the country's security and influence its political course. Although the objectives of the various frozen conflicts in the region vary, all have been used by the Russian Federation to control many of the former Soviet countries in the region.

Therefore, the Republic of Moldova has a strong need to diversify energy resources and improve its infrastructure, actions that require strong political will and external assistance. The use of non-traditional methods of getting electricity (e.g., wind and solar) and connecting to EU energy projects are viable solutions.[264] Pursuing these options is a strategic priority for the Republic of Moldova.[265] According to the World Bank, the country's economic development is tied to its National Development Strategy (NDS). Improving energy efficiency, roads, and infrastructure are among the important strategic priorities specified by the Moldova 2020 development strategy.[266]

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[262] Iulian Chifu, *Security Decision in Moldova: Contributions to a Romania Policy to East,* (Bucharest: Editura Cartea Veche, 2009), 139–140.

[263] National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova, "Decision no. 153 of the Parliament of Republic of Moldova on 15, July 2011," Justice.md*,* (this translation by the author), http://lex.justice md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=340510.

[264] Ibid.,. 35–40.

[265] Republic of Moldova Government, "Energy Strategy of the Republic of Moldova Until 2030," Decision no. 102, February 5, 2013, Justice.md*,* http://lex.justice md/md/346670/.

[266] The World Bank, "Moldova Overview, Strategy," http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/moldova/overview#2.

The Transnistrian conflict, as well as those of Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia, certainly will remain frozen as long as necessary. The current situation in the region is entirely favorable to the Russian Federation's security, and is a plausible excuse for them to exert political influence in Georgia, Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine directly, as well as maintain a military presence close to the NATO border.

The Republic of Moldova, through endorsement of the first National Security Strategy, has demonstrated its political will to ensure the country's security. Also, recognizing the importance of security drives development and implementation of the country's democratic values. The contribution to common security and promoting stability and international security is central for Moldova, which will benefit from capacity building and reforming the national security sector structures. Considering Moldova's complex positioning and the various security issues facing Eastern Europe, the National Security Strategy comes to answer the security needs and stipulates the missions for Moldova's security forces. Even though the strategy does not include the full range of asymmetric threats and sometimes has a diplomatic character (specific to small countries) it is a deck launch for the development and improvement for the strategies that will come, ready to respond to all the threats to the Moldova national security.

IV. MOLDOVA'S ARMED NEUTRALITY: REFLECTIONS ON AUSTRIAN AND FINLAND NEUTRALITY

That's the problem with Neutrals—you never know where you stand.

—Zapp Brannigan

The major benefit of neutrality is political autonomy, but to be efficient the neutral status of a state must be internationally recognized, particularly by big powers. States that choose neutrality also must possess the necessary capabilities to be able to protect their territory and deny access to alien forces. Historically, however, many states that have declared their neutrality have suffered military invasions. For example, during World War I, Germany disregarded the neutrality of Belgium and Luxembourg to engage in war with France.[267] During World War II, this pattern of aggression continued when Nazi Germany invaded the neutral states of Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands.[268] However, during this time, Sweden and Switzerland, neutral states with armed capabilities, avoided attacks on their territories. Examples that differentiate the neutrality notion, which is perceived differently in various settings by the nation states, assimilated more as a "foreign policy rather than a legal norm."[269]

The Republic of Moldova, a small state located between two dominant neighbors, constitutionally stipulated its permanent neutrality in 1994. Given the current geopolitical situation, the pursuit of a policy of armed neutrality, explained further in this chapter, may be a better approach for ensuring the country's long-term national interests and security, considering the practice of Austria and Finland and Moldova's desired neutrality position.

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[267] Andre Weiss, "The Violation by Germany of the Neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg," in *Studies and Documents on the War*, translated by Walter Thomas (Paris: Library Armand Colin, 1915), 7–11.

[268] Peter C. Chen, "Invasion of Denmark and Norway 9 Apr 1940 - 10 Jun 1940," World War II Database, http://ww2db.com/battle_spec.php?battle_id=93.

[269] Andrew Clapham and Paola Gaeta, *Oxford Handbook of International Law in Armed Conflict* (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2014), 248.

A.   NEUTRALITY CONCEPT

Originating from the "Latin *ne uter,* meaning neither the one nor the other,"[270] neutrality is a notion widely used in international law. Neutral states cannot participate in war with other states or take part in military blocs as belligerents. There are two types of neutrality: permanent and temporary, also known as wartime and peacetime neutrality.[271] Countries like Austria, Finland, Switzerland, and Sweden enforce neutrality in different ways. For example, Austria conceives of its neutrality as a "constitutional value," rather than a formal, legal status, particularly now that Austria participates in collective security in the international environment, notably peacekeeping missions in the Middle East and Africa. On the other hand, Switzerland has a more elaborated approach to its neutrality status. Neutrality is embedded in Swiss history and security policy. Also, Swiss neutrality is directly linked with the country's national interests and represents the security and stability instrument that Switzerland uses for its security.[272]

The neutrality concept in the security context is depicted in a number of different ways identifying various types of neutrality. Thus, perpetual neutrality is based on a special treaty. By comparison, general neutrality applies to an entire state territory, whereas partial neutrality is when only part of state territory is neutral, for instance, by some agreement. Voluntary neutrality is when a state adopts the neutral status voluntarily, and conventional neutrality is when there is a specific treaty that forces the state to stay neutral. Armed neutrality is when a state adopts military measures to ensure its neutrality. Benevolent neutrality is described by the neutral manners of a state, and absolute or qualified neutrality assume supporting one of the belligerent.[273] In the Republic of Moldova case, the voluntary neutrality and benevolent neutrality is closer to

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[270] Ibid.

[271] Gunther Hauser, "Military Security and the Concept of Neutrality*,"* in *The Armed Forces and International Security Global Trends and Issues*, edited by Jean M. Callaghan and Franz Kernic (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2003), 321.

[272] Central Intelligence Agency, "Switzerland," *World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sz.html.

[273] Oppenheim, *International Law Vol. II: War and Neutrality*.

its model of neutrality. However, a state can use one or more types of neutrality at the same time, depending on its security requirements.

Two Hague Conventions that entered into force in 1910 (e.g., *Laws of War: Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land [Hague V]*, and *Respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers in Naval War [Hague XII])* provide the fundamental legal basis of the neutrality notion.[274] The core obligations of the neutral state are: no military involvement in any conflicts, no military support to any country involved in the conflict, and equal attitudes towards belligerents. The neutral state also is obligated to use its own armed forces to defend its territory and avoid violation of its neutrality by belligerents, requiring respect for its neutrality[275]

B.   REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA NEUTRALITY

The first point of Article 11 of Moldova's 1991 constitution states that the "Republic of Moldova proclaims its permanent neutrality," and the second point of the same article manifests the country's position toward the presence of foreign troops: "the Republic of Moldova shall not allow the dispersal of foreign military troops on its territory."[276]

Perceived first as an optimal option, over time it was demonstrated that Moldova's neutrality status was a desire of Russia, which sought to maintain and expand its geopolitical influence in the area. This neutral status was transformed later into an instrument of political pressure.[277]

Russia's desire to return and maintain its control over former Soviet countries led to the establishment of CIS. Besides the economic and social elements, the creation of the CIS has provided the Russian Federation a lawful position by which to maintain troops in the CIS countries. In this context, the permanent neutrality status of the Republic of

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[274] Clapham and Gaeta, *Oxford Handbook of International Law in Armed Conflict*, 249.

[275] Ibid.

[276] Presidency of the Republic of Moldova, "Constitution of the Republic of Moldova," General Principles, http://www.president md/titlul1.

[277] Vasile Botnaru, "Neutrality as Insecurity," Radio Free Europe, http://www.europalibera.org/content/article/1821448 html.

Moldova has served to reject Russia's request for military cooperation. Thus, neutrality has consolidated Moldova's independence and averted Russian dominance, although this position has made Moldova's joining NATO debatable.[278]

Another critical element in Moldova's neutrality, which significantly influences the country's internal and external affairs, is that its permanent neutrality is not internationally recognized.[279] However, to some extent, this situation offers Moldova a flexible and favorable position. For example, international recognition of its permanent neutral status will force the Russian troops to withdraw from Moldova territory. Promoting Euro-Atlantic integration also will be inconvenient for Russia. Both options involve risks and opportunities for the security and future of the Republic of Moldova.[280]

However, considering the country's permanent neutral status stipulated by its constitution, position which is broadly supported by the elected officials and political parties, to some extent indicate the country's chosen vector.[281] Certainly the international environment is changing constantly, requiring states to adjust their internal and external policies. Resulting from its geopolitical situation and national interests, the Republic of Moldova must choose the optimal options to ensure the country's security/territorial

[278] BBC, "HARDtalk on Location: Iurie Leancă," *BBC News,* July 31, 2014, http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04dqrqp; Iurie Leanca, the Prime Minister of Moldova declared on radio BBC that "Neutrality is a Concept. Joining a military Bloc could be a target. We should carefully examine the real situation. We need to find a consensus with NATO, we have a frozen conflict, but we have a domestic public opinion unfavorable of NATO."

[279] Vladimir Socor, "Guarantee of Neutrality is a New Russian Trap to Condition an Unconditional Obligation - The Withdrawal of its Troops," *Flux National Cotidian,* No.200856 (March 28, 2008), http://www.flux.md/editii/200856/articole/2660/.

[280] CID NATO, "Neutrality Status of the Republic of Moldova in the Context of 20 Years of Independence and Cooperation with of NATO and Partner Countries in this Status," *Newsletter Partnership For Security,* no. 4 (August 25, 2011), transcript of radio broadcast of August 25, 2011 made by Radio Moldova in collaboration with the Center for Information and Documentation on of NATO in Moldova and with the financial support of NATO Public Diplomacy Department, http://nato.md/uploads/Analize%20si%20comentarii/Transcripturi%20Emisiuni%20RADIO/2011/transcript%2025.08.pdf.

[281] InfoTag, "Politics," News, June 20, 2014, http://www.infotag.md/politics-ro/189807/; The Prime Minister of RM Iurie Leanca mentions that Moldova may increase neutrality, creating a solid foundation for regional stability declaring that "Our European integration means, above all, strengthening Moldova's sovereignty, not reducing it or making it vulnerable. We do it by building state institutions, becoming part of a family of prosperous relations which are based on mutual respect. Taking the model of countries such as Austria or Sweden we have a chance to strengthen the concept of neutrality, which will create a solid foundation of stability in the region."

integrity, and avoid military conflicts. It can look to some of its neutral neighbors in this connection.

C. AUSTRIA'S NEUTRALITY

Austrian neutrality is based on a treaty signed in 1955 by the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain, and France. The treaty "granted Austria independence and arranged for the withdrawal of all occupation forces."[282] Signing this treaty, the Allies predicted that Austrian neutrality would serve as a "buffer zone" between the USSR and the West. This treaty represents the only case during the Cold War era when the Soviet Union extracted its forces from an occupied country.[283]

According to Article 1 of the Austrian Constitution, ratified on October 26, 1955:

(1) For the purpose of the permanent maintenance of her external independence and for the purpose of the inviolability of her territory, Austria, of her own free will, declares herewith her permanent neutrality which she is resolved to maintain and defend with all the means at her disposal. (2) In order to secure these purposes, Austria will never in the future accede to any military alliances nor permit the establishment of military bases of foreign States on her territory.[284]

Nevertheless, following its neutrality, Austria promoted an intensive foreign policy, which demonstrates the country's commitment to join international security organizations.[285] In 1955, Austria joined the United Nations (UN), and since 1960 has provided peacekeeping troops for various UN missions, including currently in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, the Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia, Cyprus, and Syria.[286] Despite its neutral status, an Austrian also

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[282] U.S. Department of State, "Austrian State Treaty, 1955," Archive, http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/lw/107185 htm.

[283] Ibid.

[284] Tschentscher A., "Austria - Constitutional Law on the Neutrality of Austria," International Constitutional Law Countries, http://www.servat.unibe.ch/icl/au06000_.html.

[285] Otmar Lahodynsky, "The Changing Face of Austrian Neutrality," NATO on-line Library, http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1992/9206-5 htm.

[286] Austrian Foreign Ministry, "Austria in the SC 2009–2010: Austria is Fully Committed to the Objectives and Principles of the United Nations Charta," Security Council, http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/austrian-mission/austrian-mission-new-york/security-council/austria-in-the-sc-2009-2010.html.

held the UN high position of Secretary General from 1971 to 1981.[287] For many years, the country has additionally brokered relations between East and West, hosting disarmament meetings in the setup of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.[288]

On January 1, 1995, after a long process of integration that had started in 1989, Austria became an EU member.[289] In this context, reflecting the political will of two-thirds of Austrians voters expressed in a 1994 referendum, Austria adopted a national strategy of common defense. Along with Austria's *Act of Accession to the EU*, the country also amended its constitution. Accordingly, the CSDP has priority over Austrian Constitutional Law on Austria's Permanent Neutrality.[290]

> In connection with the ratification of the EU Treaty as amended by the Amsterdam European Council, Art. 23f of the constitution was further amended in the sense of clarifying that Austria's participation in missions in the framework of the "Petersberg-Tasks" (including peace enforcement combat missions) is not to be restricted by the Federal Constitutional Law on Austria's Permanent Neutrality.[291]

However, Austria is not seeking NATO membership. Nevertheless, the country's "neutrality remains technical" because Austria has participated in NATO's Partnership for Peace (1995) and NATO missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1996) and Kosovo (1999).[292] The PfP agreement, signed between Austria and NATO in 1995, outlines the essential domains of cooperation: "Cooperation to strengthen peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic Area; Protecting and advancing Democracy and Human Rights; Upholding the principles of International Law; Fulfilling the obligations set out in the Charter of the

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[287] Lahodynsky, "The Changing Face of Austrian Neutrality."

[288] Ibid.

[289] Austrian Foreign Ministry, "Austria in the EU," Foreign Policy, http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/foreign-ministry/foreign-policy/europe/european-union/austria-in-the-eu.html.

[290] Austrian Foreign Ministry, "Common European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP)," http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/foreign-ministry/foreign-policy/europe/european-union/common-foreign-and-security-policy-cfsp/esdp.html.

[291] Ibid.

[292] Matthias Wurz, "NATO Passé: The 60th Anniversary Resurrects the Question of Austria's Neutrality," *The Vienna Review* (May 2009), http://www.viennareview.net/news/special-report/nato-passe.

United Nations and the Declaration of Human Rights."[293] This document allows Austria, even with its neutral status, to cooperate with NATO and the PfP states in peacekeeping missions, humanitarian and disaster relief, and search and rescue operations.[294] These missions have included JFOR/SFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1995–2004), KFOR in Kosovo (since 1999), ISAF in Afghanistan, and KFOR in (2008–2009).[295]

For Austria, PfP cooperation is essential for ensuring its interoperability with NATO and other PfP countries, which allows its contribution to multinational missions. Considering that a majority of NATO members are also EU members, Austria's military involvement with NATO highlights its central importance to the alliance.[296] Its rationalized neutrality status today promotes the country's interests, ensures its national security, and contributes to regional defense.

D.   FINLAND'S NEUTRALITY

Finland's independence and neutrality derives from 1917, when it self-declared its status. Its neutrality policy, weak from the beginning, involved Finland in both world wars, struggling to maintain its sovereignty from the USSR.[297] The country's neutral position was recognized in the 1948 Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (FCMA), signed between the Soviet Union and Finland. This treaty allowed Soviet military bases on Finnish soil and bound Finland to protect its neutrality using its armed forces.

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[293] Austrian Foreign Ministry, "Austria Participation in the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)," Foreign Policy, http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/foreign-ministry/foreign-policy/europe/nato-partnership-for-peace html.

[294] Ibid.

[295] KFOR, "KFOR Chronicle ed.6," June 2008, http://www.aco nato.int/resources/site7423/General/Chronicle%20Archive/2008/chronicle_06.pdf; On May 29, 2008, Austrian Brigadier General Robert Prader became commander of the Multinational Task Force South (MNTF S) in Kosovo. It was the first nomination of an officer leading an Austrian KFOR brigade with 4,000 troops from various nations, and the first time when an Austrian general assumed command of the Multinational Task Force South.

[296] Austrian Foreign Ministry, "Austria Participation in the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), Foreign Policy, http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/foreign-ministry/foreign-policy/europe/nato-partnership-for-peace html.

[297] Eric Solsten and Sandra W. Meditz, *Finland: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1988), http://countrystudies.us/finland/137 htm.

Finland was not made part of the Soviet military alliance, but was obliged only to defend its own territory if attacked by Germany or by countries allied with that country, or if the Soviet Union were attacked by these powers through Finnish territory. In addition, consultations between Finland and the Soviet Union were required if the threat of such an attack were established. According to the FCMA treaty, Finland was not bound to aid the Soviet Union if that country were attacked elsewhere, and the consultations were to be between sovereign states, not between military allies. Just what constituted a military threat was not specified, but the right of the Finns to discuss the posited threat and how it should be met, that is, to what extent military assistance would be required, allowed Finnish officials room for maneuver and deprived the treaty of an automatic character.[298]

In this context, Finland maintains its neutrality policy to protect its territory and independence. Also, the FCMA treaty stipulates Finland's aspiration to the UN principles of peace and requires the Finnish non-involvement in the European Recovery Program (Marshall Plan).[299] As in the Austrian case, Finland enforced its neutrality as a feasible solution against Soviet dominance.[300]

To avoid problems with the USSR during World War II, Finland took a cautious political approach to joining various Western-initiated economic and financial programs, such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Bank.[301] Finnish neutrality took a more preeminent shape when the USSR withdrew its forces from the vicinity of Helsinki in 1955, and Finland joined the UN and Nordic Council. In 1960, Finland's neutrality was internationally recognized. Since then, the country's neutrality has been used more effectively in promoting Finnish security interests in the international arena.[302]

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[298] Ibid.

[299] Solsten and W. Meditz, "Finland: A Country Study."

[300] Slovenia–NATO, "Neutral European Countries: Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, Ireland," National Security, http://nato.gov.si/eng/topic/national-security/neutral-status/neutral-countries/.

[301] Solsten and Meditz, *Finland: A Country Study*.

[302] Ibid.

During the Cold War, NATO played an important role in Finnish security architecture. The neutrality of Sweden, as well as the positioning of Norway and Denmark as NATO countries, particularly made Finnish neutrality essential for ensuring its security and playing a central role between West and East.[303] The important role that Finland has played in the nonaligned community can be seen in its leadership role in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Nordic Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone (NWFZ), and the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT).[304]

For Finland, neutrality provided an opportunity to contribute to regional security and modernize its defense potential. However, military deterrence has not been the main pillar on which Finnish neutrality has been based.[305] Although Finland joined the European Union in 1995 to ensure its national security and improve its development, the country has maintained its neutrality through military non-alignment and autonomous defense.[306]

Finland's neutrality has its roots in the beginning of 20th century, and the country is perceived as a product of its foreign policy in its struggle avoiding the influence of the USSR. Finland's "choice of neutrality was motivated by security policy,"[307] and its improvement was dictated by its history. Among various forms of neutrality, Finland's neutrality status is different compared with other neutrals. Viewed as a "policy of neutrality" or "aimed at neutrality" rather than pure neutrality,"[308] the Finnish type of neutrality seems to work well for the country.[309] Thus, acting as a non-aligned country,

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[303] Jaakko Blomberg, "Finland's Evolving Security Policy," Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, *NATO on Line Library*, http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1993/9301-3 htm.

[304] Solsten and Meditz, *Finland: A Country Study*.

[305] Blomberg, "Finland's Evolving Security Policy."

[306] Sinikka Salo, "Finland – From a Crisis to a Successful Member of the EU and EMU," Seminar at Narodowy Bank Polski, Warsaw, April 21, 2006, http://www.suomenpankki.fi/en/suomen_pankki/ajankohtaista/puheet/Documents/060421SS_Puola.pdf.

[307] Antero Eerola, "Non-Alignment and Neutrality from a Nordic Perspective," Transform Network, http://transform-network net/journal/issue-012007/news/detail/Journal/non-alignment-and-neutrality-from-a-nordic-perspective.html.

[308] Ibid.

[309] Ibid.

Finland is an EU member with full rights also; their involvement in PfP NATO projects is central and concomitant in keeping its good relations with the Russia Federation, which provides for them the necessary security architecture specific for a small country with a strong neighbor.[310]

E.   ARMED NEUTRALITY

Besides the different types of neutrality identified in the international security environment, armed neutrality is a particular model, which gives options to the neutrals states to arm themselves and build their defence capability against all hostility that threatens their neutrality. The concept of armed neutrality has been defined in military, legal, and political science, as well. However, in all of these contexts the focus is on creating, building, and maintaining an armed capability of a neutral state strong enough to protect its neutrality. Armed neutrality is legally defined in international politics as an

> attitude of a state or group of states which makes no alliance with either side in a war. It is the condition of a neutral power, at war, which holds itself ready to resist by force any aggression of either belligerent. Such states assert that they will defend themselves against resulting incursions from all parties.[311]

The history of armed neutrality is documented by Andrew Clapham and Paola Gaeta in the *Oxford Handbook of International Law in Armed Conflict.*[312] They argue that armed neutrality was first conceptualized in 1780 by a Russian initiative. The treaty was signed by Prussia, Austria, Denmark, Portugal, and Sweden, establishing rules regarding the treatment of neutral ships. The second case of armed neutrality noted by the authors arose in 1800 from a British naval blockade during the Napoleonic Wars. The armed neutrality treaty was signed by Russia, Denmark, Sweden, and Prussia in response to Great Britain's refusal to exempt neutral ships from searches. Thus, it made "armed neutrality" the first term used between states in war on land and sea concerning the

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[310] Ibid.

[311] U.S. Legal, "Armed Neutrality Law & Legal Definition," USLegal, http://definitions.uslegal.com/a/armed-neutrality/.

[312] Clapham and Gaeta, *Oxford Handbook of International Law in Armed Conflict*, 250.

neutrality. The Hague Conventions of 1907 defined the term of neutrality and its various forms, specifying its rights and duties in a legal framework.[313]

Armed neutrality was and still is used by different neutral countries, such as Switzerland, Austria, and Finland, to ensure their national security interests, because of their size, power, and geopolitical settings. However, their neutrality still allows them to keep and modernize their own armed forces and contribute to their national and regional security, as well. Along with other forms of neutrality, armed neutrality seems to be a plausible solution for neutral states in ensuring their security and protect their sovereignty.

F.   ARMED NEUTRALITY PERSPECTIVES FOR MOLDOVA

Unlike Austria and Finland, whose neutrality was negotiated, Moldova's current neutrality status was imposed to avoid direct Russian control as a "consequence of defeat" and "military occupation"[314] shortly after the country declared its independence.

> Moldova's neutrality is rationalization of the status quo, which is an attempt to explain / define a fact subsequently spent over capacity control of Chisinau. And how military occupation must have a name, was given the name of neutrality. Unlike most of the former Soviet Union states, Chisinau was defeated by the Empire or its extensions after the collapse. The neutrality was chosen as a name for the occupation and for the second stage of confrontation with the Empire, after the military defeat itself.[315]

Since that time, the Moldovan government has used neutrality as a security instrument in crisis situations.[316] However, rather than serving as an efficient tool for crisis management, the country's permanent neutrality status has created deadlock situations and deprived Moldova of other security options.[317] Regarding the current situation, which also favors the Russian Federation and its regional interests, one scholar

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[313] Ibid.

[314] Dan Dungaciu, "Foreword," quoted in Chifu Iulian, *Security Decision in Moldova: Contributions to a Romania policy to East* (Bucharest: Editura Cartea Veche, 2009), 9.

[315] Ibid., (this translation by the author.)

[316] Dungaciu, "Foreword," 9.

[317] Ibid.

has observed, "Moldova does not have neutrality, at least one that offers security and internal stability."[318]

Moldova's chance to overcome Soviet influence in the early 1990s, turn to democratic values, and adopt a free market economy, as Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia did, was lost shortly after the USSR breakdown.[319] In view of recent events in Ukraine and throughout the region, the best security option for Moldova today may be the pursuit of a policy of *armed neutrality*. In the absence of a consolidated position referring to NATO and EU accession, such political positioning would provide Moldova with opportunities for working efficiently with both neighboring nations and the West, as well as maintaining good relations with the dominant political, military, and economic force in the region: the Russian Federation. The successful application of such a model of armed neutrality in Moldova also can significantly increase the country's role in the security architecture of the Black Sea Basin. In view of the country's strategic location and historical background, Moldova is well positioned to play a central role as an honest broker between the European Union and the East, contributing to its own and regional security.

Distinguishing Moldova's neutrality as *armed* is important because neutral states have the right to self-defense, as well as the obligations of avoiding taking part in conflicts or providing its territory for use by belligerents. In addition to the right to use armed capabilities in their defense, neutral states have the right to sign international treaties and ask for help in case of aggression.[320]

Thus, starting from the idea that a neutral country must be in a position to secure its own neutrality and contribute to regional and global security, a policy of armed

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[318] Alexandru Musteata, "The Neutrality of the Republic of Moldova - Stabilize or Destabilize Regional Security?" The Twenty Ten Theme, Alexandru Musteata Blog, http://alexmusteata.wordpress.com/2010/07/12/statutul-de-neutralitate-al-republicii-moldova-%E2%80%93-factor-de-stabilizare-sau-destabilizare-al-securitatii-regionale/.

[319] Aurelian Lavric, "The Problem of The Neutrality of the Republic of Moldova within the Context of the Ensuring of its Security," Aurelian Lavric Blog, http://aurelian-lavric.blogspot.com/2012/09/problema-neutralitatii-republicii html.

[320] Chifu, *Security Decision in Moldova: Contributions to a Romania Policy to East*, 85.

neutrality also is important for the Republic of Moldova to provide opportunities for military modernization and security optimization.

The comparative study of Austria and Finland provides the Republic of Moldova a model for its own neutrality. Although the geopolitical situations in those countries are somewhat different from those in Moldova, a foreign policy of neutrality borrowed from these countries but crafted to suit the specific needs of Moldova could improve the country's security through cooperation with the West and reduce associated costs through defense-sector reforms.

While acting as a neutral country, defined by its obligation to defend its own neutrality, Austria pursued membership in international security organizations.[321] By comparison, Finland's geographic position near the Russian border shaped its neutrality status as a "defense solution"[322] within its security doctrine while the country modernized and developed its armed capabilities.[323]

Some experts argue that the Republic of Moldova cannot economically or politically afford the costs of armed neutrality.[324] For example, in terms of defense expenditures as a percentage of GDP, today Moldova only spends 0.3 percent on defense,[325] compared to Finland (1.36 percent),[326] Austria (0.9 percent),[327] and

[321] Gerald Hinteregger, "Policy Views*," in *Between the Blocs: Problems and Prospects for Europe's Neutral and Nonaligned States*, edited by Joseph Kruzel and Michael H. Haltzel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 274.

[322] Alina Florina Androne, "European Neutral Countries and the Common Foreign and Security Policy" (Bucharest: master's thesis, Security Studies, University School of Sociology and Social Assistance, 2006), 35–37.

[323] Ibid.

[324] Musteata, "The Neutrality of the Republic of Moldova - Stabilize or Destabilize Regional Security?"

[325] The World Bank, "Military Expenditure (% of GDP)," Moldova, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS.

[326] Gerard O'Dwyer, "Cross-Party Support Grows in Finland to Boost Defense Spending, *DefenseNews*, http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140717/DEFREG01/307170039/Cross-Party-Support-Grows-Finland-Boost-Defense-Spending.

[327] The World Bank, "Military Expenditure (% of GDP)," Austria, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS.

Switzerland (3.0 percent.)[328] However, if the Republic of Moldova were to pursue a foreign policy of armed neutrality, the cost of this policy could be shared by international partners. The country's involvement in various international security programs also could facilitate the development of armed forces and benefit the training of its military and civilian personnel, increasing the capabilities of the national security structures.

The Finnish experience of armed neutrality, however, provides the closest viable solutions for the Republic of Moldova. The Russian influence and NATO reticence are common situations between these two. In Finland's case the majority of the population supports armed neutrality as a defense strategy.[329] Additionally, Finland's experience of joining the European Union and its neutral role in CSDP, NATO PfP cooperation, and UN contribution can serve as guidelines for the Republic of Moldova security development. Public opinion in Moldova also tends toward maintaining neutrality status, and political leadership supports a foreign policy of neutrality. According to Moldova's Prime Minister Iurie Leanca:

> For the moment there is the Constitution which stipulates that Moldova is a neutral state, and polls show that most citizens favor of maintaining neutrality status. Also, to join the European Union is not compulsory to join NATO. Countries such as Finland and Sweden are not members of NATO, but are part of the EU.[330]

Although Prime Minister Leanca mentioned that the situation in Moldova is now stable, and that there is no external risk from Romania and Ukraine, he also declared that the presence of Russian troops in Moldova is still an issue to solve.[331]

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[328] The World Bank, "Military Expenditure (% of GDP)," Switzerland, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS.

[329] Androne, "European Neutral Countries and the Common Foreign and Security Policy," 36.

[330] IPN, "Iurie Leanca: Moldova Will Maintain its Neutral Status," IPN Politics, http://www.ipn md/ro/politica/64127.

[331] Ibid.

G.   CONCLUSION AND PROSPECTS

Although the neutrality status of the Republic of Moldova is not yet fully consolidated,[332] the armed neutral concept can serve as a reasonable solution for the security of the country. However, implementation of such a policy of armed neutrality will require reforms and international recognition. A public relations campaign also is needed to inform Moldovan society about the benefits and risks of armed neutrality.

> Permanently neutral states are particularly sensitive to public opinion, at home as well as abroad. Their decision to seek security not in alliance but in a state of self-chosen, lasting neutrality must have the backing of an overwhelming majority of their own populations. It would not be sufficient to have the support of only a major part of the population: neutrality is a decision lightly taken or shed. It requires a consensus almost as well grounded, as extensive and widespread, as independence itself. The citizens of permanently neutral states must be deeply convinced that their status can protect their independence, security, and way of life better than alliance. They must also be ready to accept the burdens of neutrality: a filing of separateness and self-reliance; the recognition that neutrality requires not less but much more vigilance of the world scene; and last but certainly not least, the burden of an adequate Defense of their system, a military preparedness that must be, if anything, higher than that in a country whose security is protected by an alliance.[333]

In Austria and Finland, "neutrality required a great deal of conceptual consistence and domestic unanimity."[334] Likewise in the Republic of Moldova, for a foreign policy of armed neutrality to be efficient, public opinion must be perfectly informed on the benefits and risks of neutrality. However, the presence of Russian troops in the disputed separatists Transnistrian region is an ever present remainder of the political limits of what can be publicly discussed and operationalized.

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[332] INFOTAG, "Iurie Leanca: Moldova May Consolidate its Neutrality, Creating a Solid Foundation for Regional Stability," INFOTAG Politics, http://www.infotag md/politics-ro/189807/.

[333] Hans Thalberg, "Public Opinion," in *Between the Blocs: Problems and Prospects for Europe's Neutral and Nonaligned States*, edited by Joseph Kruzel and Michael H. Haltzel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 235.

[334] Johanna Rainio-Niemi, *The Ideological Cold War: The Politics of Neutrality in Austria and Finland* (New York: Routledge, 2014), i.

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V.   CONCLUSION AND FUTURE EXPECTATIONS

The modern security architecture requires a joint effort between states, and it also requires adjusting the national security strategies to this environment. However, given the security issues facing the Republic of Moldova, adopting a policy of armed neutrality may provide more security options and strategic alternatives in this regard. Such strategic positioning also could significantly increase Moldova's role in the regional security of the Black Sea Basin.

This thesis has attempted to analyze the political and military challenges that the Republic of Moldova faces as an armed neutral state in the regional security architecture of the Black Sea Basin. As a potential model for the Republic of Moldova, the analysis has included a study of how small and neutral states like Austria and Finland have ensured their national security. The basic analytic approach focused on security issues that shape the topic, focusing on various case studies and structured comparisons.

The cross-national comparison and methodical framework was employed to assess the security results achieved by the neutral states in ensuring their security, and their contribution to regional and global security. The armed neutrality of small states may ensure their domestic, regional, and global security. This framework demonstrates that a variety of factors can influence national security, including the geopolitical situation, unresolved "frozen" conflicts, ethnic problems, developmental status, and energy dependence. The study also analyzed the positive and negative consequences of armed neutrality, concluding with an examination of the lessons learned from other states that can benefit the Republic of Moldova.

The eastward expansion of NATO and the European Union has turned the Black Sea Basin into a region called by many scholars the "gatekeeper of the European identity."[335] In the ongoing ideological clash between East and West, the area has become characterized by numerous—and overlapping—partnerships, programs, and

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[335] Ion Grosu, "Concluding Remarks," in *the Strategic Knowledge in the Wider Black Sea Area*, edited by George Cristian Maior and Sergei Konoplyov (Bucharest: Editura RAO, 2011), 250.

projects geared toward stabilization and development, as well as preparation for integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions. Security cooperation—as well as economic, political, and military development—is now the main concern of the states in the Black Sea region. From a strategic and security perspective,

> the Black Sea is a meeting point of old risks and new challenges. It has a strategic relevance both from the perspective of the need to counter the complex security threats, and the possibility to capitalize on the security opportunities it poses. The Black Sea is a unique region connecting Europe and Asia, crossed by major energy corridors. It is also a platform for exporting stability and democracy towards Caucasus and Central Asia, especially against the background of serious security challenges, such as arms and drug trafficking (towards Europe), illegal migrations and organized crime, that juxtapose old threats (i.e., frozen conflicts) which lead to a new phrase when referring to the Black Sea security—"hybrid threats."[336]

The Republic of Moldova's security role in this conglomerate setting of history, religion, culture, and geography is interconnected with other Black Sea states in the region. Joint security cooperation is the key. Developing and improving collaboration and Moldova's defense capabilities are essential, especially now with "Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine."[337] The frozen conflict within its territory also has significantly deteriorated the regional security. Moldova, as the nearest country to Ukraine, is primarily concerned about its future security. The persistence of "transnational and multi-dimensional threats"[338] intersecting the European continent from the Middle East and Africa also jeopardize the security in the Black Sea Basin.

Moldova's security options are dependent on the country's supreme law. Austria, Finland, and other European states adopted foreign policies of neutrality primarily to meet their security needs, proceeding from their geopolitical settings, country's size, and the population's desire for neutrality. Additionally, these neutral counties have never stopped modernizing their armed forces to protect their neutrality. However, some

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[336] Grosu, "Concluding Remarks," 250–251.

[337] NATO, "Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales," Press Release No. 120, September 5, 2014, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm?selectedLocale=en.

[338] Ibid.

experiences from these neutral countries can serve as a plausible solution for the Republic of Moldova's actual security struggle. Adopting such an armed neutral policy will offer Moldova more security options and opportunities for cooperation with neighboring countries and strategic partners. As a part of the Black Sea Basin, if the Republic of Moldova adopts a policy of armed neutrality, it will be positioned to participate in and contribute more actively to the regional security architecture.

On the other hand, joining NATO, which is considered "the transatlantic framework for strong collective defense and the essential forum for security consultations and decisions among Allies"[339] in the region, is still viewed with reluctance by a part of Moldova society. Although Moldova has maintained relations with NATO for more than two decades, the negative stereotype of NATO dating back from the Cold War period has persisted.[340] This situation has resulted from a general lack of information about the advantages and the disadvantages of the NATO alliance, particularly due to misinformation in Moldova's media space controlled by the Russia Federation.[341]

However, the outbreak of hostilities in Ukraine has made the Moldovan government think more gravely about the country's security and defense capacity. During the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales,[342] Moldova's Minister of Defense highlighted the

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[339] NATO, "Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales."

[340] Voice of Bessarabia, "Lying Neutrality of the Constitution of Moldova," Radio Voice of Bessarabia, September 5, 2014, http://voceabasarabiei.net/index.php/presa-romaneasca/25182-minciuna-neutralitatii-din-constitutia-moldovei.

[341] Valentin Buda, "Republic of Moldova, Russian Disinformation Polygon. The Kremlin Trumpets Have Control of Three Quarters of the Media Space Controlled Theoretically by Chisinau," *Vezi.md* Politics, http://www.evz md/ro/politica/item/2588-republica-moldova-poligon-de-dezinformare-rusesc-trompetele-kremlinului-detin-trei-patrimi-din-spatiul-media-controlat-teoretic-de-chisinau.html.

[342] NATO, "Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales"; The 2014 NATO Summit came up with a new Defense and Security initiative for the Republic of Moldova, which is stipulated in article 89 of Wales Summit Declaration: "Today we have decided to launch a Defense and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative to reinforce our commitment to partner nations and to help the Alliance to project stability without deploying large combat forces, as part of the Alliance's overall contribution to international security and stability and conflict prevention. The Initiative builds upon NATO's extensive expertise in supporting, advising and assisting nations with Defense and related security capacity building. Building on our close cooperation and following their requests, we have agreed to extend this initiative to Georgia, Jordan, and the Republic of Moldova. We are also ready to consider requests from interested partners and non-partners, as well as to engage with international and regional organizations, with an interest in building their Defense and related security capacity through this demand-driven initiative."

security concern of Moldova. Regarding this concern, NATO, the European Union, and Moldova's other strategic partners have committed to supporting the country through various security initiatives.[343] The official position of the Republic of Moldova about maintaining constitutional neutrality, which is shared by Moldova's main political parties,[344] was recently articulated by Prime Minister Leanca:

> Moldova is a neutral country. Neutrality gives us a solid foundation for solving the Transnistrian conflict and removes all security concerns from Russia. This proves that bringing Moldova closer to the European Union is not a threat to Russia's security interests. We do not intend to create tension and unnecessary complications. We are not interested in a geopolitical discord. We attach this approach and we expect Russia to take steps in this direction. Also, we have a coalition government in which there may be different views. It is a normal process, which occurs in all countries with a multi-party system of government.[345]

Thus, as long as a large part of society and the main political class sees neutrality as the optimal solution for ensuring state security,[346] all future security options that Moldova would like to assume must result from this perspective.

Regarding the EU-Moldova security perspectives, the processes are evolving along with the country's aspirations of joining the union.[347] The European CSDP promotes the EU military and defense intentions to insure common European security

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[343] Ibid.

[344] Ina Croitoru, "Defense Minister First Time Invited to a NATO Summit," *Deschide.md Politics*, http://www.deschide.md/ro/news/politic/4847/Ministrul-Ap%C4%83r%C4%83rii-INVITAT-%C3%AEn-PREMIER%C4%82-la-un-summit-NATO htm.

[345] Iuliana Enache, "Iurie Leanca Ensure Russia that Moldova Will Keep its Neutrality Status," *Mediafax.ro* Foreign Affairs (translation by the author), http://www mediafax.ro/externe/iurie-leanca-asigura-rusia-ca-republica-moldova-isi-va-pastra-statutul-de-neutralitate-13231466.

[346] Center for Analysis and Investigations Sociological, Political, and Psychological CIVIS, "Barometer of Public Opinion Republic of Moldova March-April 2014," Institute for Public Policy, 62–63, http://www.ipp md/public/files/Barometru/Brosura_BOP_04.2014_prima_parte_final-rg.pdf.

[347] Delegation of European Union to Moldova, "EU-Moldova Relations: Pursuing Common Goals from the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement to the Association Agreement," Europa.eu Moldova and EU, http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/eu_moldova/index_en htm; "Relations between the EU and Moldova have been guided by the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and the ENP Action Plan. Now, they will be replaced by the EU-Moldova Association Agreement (AA), including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) and an Association Agenda. The assistance to be provided during the programming period 2014–2020 is synchronized with the priorities and objective set out in the new Agreements. EU bilateral assistance to Moldova under the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI) sharply increased from € 40 million in 2007 to € 131 million in 2014."

through multilateral cooperation. This security framework also provides for the participation and contribution of non-EU states in this project.[348] The Treaty on European Union (TEU) Article 21 on CSDP partnership states:

> [M]ultilateralism is at the core of the EU's external action. The Union shall promote multilateral solutions to common problems, in particular in the framework of the United Nations. There are few if any problems we can deal with on our own. The threats described are common threats, shared with all our closest partners. International co-operation is a necessity. We need to pursue our objectives both through multilateral co-operation in international organizations and through partnerships with key actors.[349]

The European Security Strategy[350] was approved in 2003, revised in 2008, and improved in 2009 with the Lisbon Treaty.[351] The development of the CSDP reflects the complexity of the threats to European security.[352] The strategy is based on the assumption that "no single country is able to tackle today's complex problems on its own."[353] Thus, the CSDP could involve non-EU and non-NATO countries in its security processes. For the Republic of Moldova, involvement in this security architecture will

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[348] Europe Summaries of EU legislations, "European Security Strategy," Summary, http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/justice_freedom_security/fight_against_organised_crime/r00004_en.htm.

[349] European Union External Actions, "Security and Defense CSDP," CSDP Partnership, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/partners/index_en.htm.

[350] Europe Summaries of EU Legislations, "European Security Strategy," Summary, http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/justice_freedom_security/fight_against_organised_crime/r00004_en.htm; "The European security strategy was drawn up under the authority of the EU's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, and adopted by the Brussels European Council of 12 and 13 December 2003. It identifies the global challenges and key threats to the security of the Union and clarifies its strategic objectives in dealing with them, such as building security in the EU's neighborhood and promoting an international order based on effective multilateralism. It also assesses the policy implications that these objectives have for Europe."

[351] European Union External Actions, "Security and Defense CSDP," About CSDP, http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/about-csdp/index_en htm.

[352] Council of the European Union, "European Security Strategy, a Secure Europe in a Better World, Brussels, December 12, 2003," European Communities, 2009, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/librairie/PDF/QC7809568ENC.pdf.

[353] Ibid., 27.

allow the country to contribute more broadly to regional security, as well as benefit from the CSDP security mechanisms by developing Moldova's security sector.[354]

With this in mind, realizing the roles that the European Union and NATO can play as pivotal security providers in the region, the Republic of Moldova should reassess its security options. Accordingly, the country's limited defense capabilities and economic, political, and energy dependence on the Russian Federation might require Moldova to adopt a policy of armed neutrality and collective security. Conclusions drawn from the research presented in this thesis additionally indicate that such political positioning may be the best option for small countries like the Republic of Moldova that are located in a tough neighborhood.

Economic and energy dependence, the presence of a frozen conflict on its territory, and lack of control over the country's eastern borders makes Moldova highly vulnerable to external pressures. These problems directly influence domestic and foreign policy. However, whatever security options are chosen by Moldova—either by continuing its European-integration process, by joining EU and NATO security systems, or by maintaining its neutrality status—adopting an armed neutral policy can be functional. Such a policy of armed neutrality will provide the country with the necessary tools to develop interoperability with the European Union and NATO in support of common regional security efforts. Adopting a policy of armed neutrality also will develop and increase Moldova's defense capability to protect its neutrality if necessary.

Although the study of other neutral states in Europe provides important historical and political data, it is well understood that what worked for them may not be the case for Moldova. The security of the Republic of Moldova is a specific case. Its struggle to ensure the country's national security and contribute to regional security is immense. Nevertheless, one thing is certain: the Republic of Moldova will have to adjust its security to be economically, politically, and militarily competitive, taking into account its geostrategic positioning and the desire of Moldova's people.

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